



LESSON 7.3.3 | ACTIVITY | World War II in Documents

PURPOSE

This activity will give you a look at primary sources related to three major military events during World War II. Each is either a speech or writing from a major political or military figure. The documents are accompanied by a chart that utilizes the SOAPSTone method of analyzing a primary source. This should allow you to both better understand the document

content while also making sure that you are paying attention to important contextual details.

ATTACHMENTS

- [World War II in Documents](#)
- [World War II Document Analysis Tool](#)

PROCESS

Read the documents, marking the texts as you go. Then, fill in the SOAPSTone chart for each document. Following the completion of the chart, you should be prepared to discuss the most important details of the pieces and also be able to compare and contrast the content and context of the documents.



READING | World War II In Documents: Document 1 Pearl Harbor Day of Infamy Speech - Franklin D. Roosevelt (1941)

Yesterday, December 7th, 1941 — a date which will live in infamy—the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.

The United States was at peace with that nation and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its government and its emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific.

Indeed, one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in the American island of Oahu, the Japanese ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered to our Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent American message. And while this reply stated that it seemed useless to continue the existing diplomatic negotiations, it contained no threat or hint of war or of armed attack.

It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago. During the intervening time, the Japanese government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. I regret to tell you that very many American lives have been lost. In addition, American ships have been reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu...

As Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy, I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense. But always will our whole nation remember the character of the onslaught against us.

No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory.

I believe that I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost, but will make it very certain that this form of treachery shall never again endanger us.

Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory, and our interests are in grave danger.

With confidence in our armed forces, with the unbounding determination of our people, we will gain the inevitable triumph — so help us God.

I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7th, 1941, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese empire.



READING | World War II In Documents: Document 2 D-Day General Eisenhower's Order of the Day, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower (1944)

Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Forces:

You are about to embark upon the Great Crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you. In company with our brave Allies and brothers-in-arms on other Fronts you will bring about the destruction of the German war machine, the elimination of Nazi tyranny over oppressed peoples of Europe, and security for ourselves in a free world.

Your task will not be an easy one. Your enemy is well trained, well equipped and battle-hardened. He will fight savagely.

But this is the year 1944. Much has happened since the Nazi triumphs of 1940-41. The United Nations have inflicted upon the Germans great defeats, in open battle, man-to-man. Our air offensive has seriously reduced their strength in the air and their capacity to wage war on the ground. Our Home Fronts have given us an overwhelming superiority in weapons and munitions of war, and placed at our disposal great reserves of trained fighting men. The tide has turned. The free men of the world are marching together to victory.

I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty, and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than full victory.

Good Luck! And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking.



READING | World War II In Documents: Document 3

Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima

Announcing the Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima, Harry S. Truman (1945)

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Sixteen hours ago an American airplane dropped one bomb on Hiroshima and destroyed its usefulness to the enemy. That bomb had more power than 20,000 tons of TNT. It had more than two thousand times the blast power of the British "Grand Slam" which is the largest bomb ever yet used in the history of warfare.

The Japanese began the war from the air at Pearl Harbor. They have been repaid many fold. And the end is not yet. With this bomb we have now added a new and revolutionary increase in destruction to supplement the growing power of our armed forces. In their present form these bombs are now in production and even more powerful forms are in development.

It is an atomic bomb. It is a harnessing of the basic power of the universe. The force from which the sun draws its power has been loosed against those who brought war to the Far East.

Before 1939, it was the accepted belief of scientists that it was theoretically possible to release atomic energy. But no one knew any practical method of doing it. By 1942, however, we knew that the Germans were working feverishly to find a way to add atomic energy to the other engines of war with which they hoped to enslave the world.

But they failed. We may be grateful to Providence that the Germans got the V-1's and V-2's late and in limited quantities and even more grateful that they did not get the atomic bomb at all.

The battle of the laboratories held fateful risks for us as well as the battles of the air, land, and sea, and we have now won the battle of the laboratories as we have won the other battles...

The United States had available the large number of scientists of distinction in the many needed areas of knowledge. It had the tremendous industrial and financial resources necessary for the project and they could be devoted to it without undue impairment of other vital war work. In the United States the laboratory work and the production plants, on which a substantial start had already been made, would be out of reach of enemy bombing, while at that time Britain was exposed to constant air attack and was still threatened with the possibility of invasion. For these reasons Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt agreed that it was wise to carry on the project here. We now have two great plants and many lesser works devoted to the production of atomic power. Employment during peak construction numbered 125,000 and over 65,000 individuals are even now engaged in operating the plants. Many have worked there for two and a half years. Few know what they have been producing. They see great quantities of material going in and they see



nothing coming out of these plants, for the physical size of the explosive charge is exceedingly small. We have spent two billion dollars on the greatest scientific gamble in history — and won.

But the greatest marvel is not the size of the enterprise, its secrecy, nor its cost, but the achievement of scientific brains in putting together infinitely complex pieces of knowledge held by many men in different fields of science into a workable plan. And hardly less marvelous has been the capacity of industry to design and of labor to operate, the machines and methods to do things never done before so that the brainchild of many minds came forth in physical shape and performed as it was supposed to do. Both science and industry worked under the direction of the United States Army, which achieved a unique success in managing so diverse a problem in the advancement of knowledge in an amazingly short time. It is doubtful if such another combination could be got together in the world. What has been done is the greatest achievement of organized science in history. It was done under pressure and without failure.

We are now prepared to obliterate more rapidly and completely every productive enterprise the Japanese have above ground in any city. We shall destroy their docks, their factories, and their communications. Let there be no mistake; we shall completely destroy Japan's power to make war.

It was to spare the Japanese people from utter destruction that the ultimatum of July 26 was issued at Potsdam. Their leaders promptly rejected that

ultimatum. If they do not now accept our terms they may expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth. Behind this air attack will follow sea and land forces in such number that and power as they have not yet seen and with the fighting skill of which they are already well aware.

...

I shall recommend that the Congress of the United States consider promptly the establishment of an appropriate commission to control the production and use of atomic power within the United States. I shall give further consideration and make further recommendations to the Congress as to how atomic power can become a powerful and forceful influence towards the maintenance of world peace.



NAME _____

COURSE _____

TIME _____

HANDOUT | Primary Source Analysis Tool

Document 1 - Pearl Harbor

<p>SPEAKER: WHO IS SPEAKING? WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE AUTHOR'S LIFE AND/OR VIEWS ON THE TOPIC?</p>	
<p>OCCASION: WHEN WAS THIS DOCUMENT WRITTEN? WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?</p>	
<p>AUDIENCE: WHO WAS MEANT TO SEE/READ/HEAR THIS DOCUMENT? WHAT ABOUT THE AUDIENCE MIGHT INFLUENCE</p>	
<p>PURPOSE: WHY WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN? WHAT IS THE SPEAKER TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH?</p>	
<p>SUBJECT: WHAT IS THE OVERALL MAIN IDEA OF THE PIECE?</p>	
<p>TONE: WHAT IS THE TONE OF THE PIECE? WHAT WORDS/QUOTES LET YOU KNOW THAT?</p>	



NAME _____

COURSE _____

TIME _____

HANDOUT | Primary Source Analysis Tool

Document 2 - D-Day

<p>SPEAKER: WHO IS SPEAKING? WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE AUTHOR'S LIFE AND/OR VIEWS ON THE TOPIC?</p>	
<p>OCCASION: WHEN WAS THIS DOCUMENT WRITTEN? WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?</p>	
<p>AUDIENCE: WHO WAS MEANT TO SEE/READ/HEAR THIS DOCUMENT? WHAT ABOUT THE AUDIENCE MIGHT INFLUENCE</p>	
<p>PURPOSE: WHY WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN? WHAT IS THE SPEAKER TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH?</p>	
<p>SUBJECT: WHAT IS THE OVERALL MAIN IDEA OF THE PIECE?</p>	
<p>TONE: WHAT IS THE TONE OF THE PIECE? WHAT WORDS/QUOTES LET YOU KNOW THAT?</p>	



NAME _____

COURSE _____

TIME _____

HANDOUT | Primary Source Analysis Tool

Document 3 - Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima

<p>SPEAKER: WHO IS SPEAKING? WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE AUTHOR'S LIFE AND/OR VIEWS ON THE TOPIC?</p>	
<p>OCCASION: WHEN WAS THIS DOCUMENT WRITTEN? WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?</p>	
<p>AUDIENCE: WHO WAS MEANT TO SEE/READ/HEAR THIS DOCUMENT? WHAT ABOUT THE AUDIENCE MIGHT INFLUENCE</p>	
<p>PURPOSE: WHY WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN? WHAT IS THE SPEAKER TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH?</p>	
<p>SUBJECT: WHAT IS THE OVERALL MAIN IDEA OF THE PIECE?</p>	
<p>TONE: WHAT IS THE TONE OF THE PIECE? WHAT WORDS/QUOTES LET YOU KNOW THAT?</p>	



LESSON 7.3.5 | READ | “The Death of Captain Waskow” – Ernie Pyle

PURPOSE

Ernie Pyle was the most famous American journalist covering World War II in Europe. Even today, his pieces from the front lines evoke countless emotions and images of Americans in physical and emotional combat on both the European and Pacific fronts. This short piece recounts soldiers’ reactions to the deaths of several compatriots, including a beloved officer. Later, World War II would

take Ernie Pyle’s life. Stationed as a war correspondent near Okinawa, Japan, Pyle was shot and killed by a Japanese machine gunner a few months before his 45th birthday.

ATTACHMENT

- [Ernie Pyle’s, “The Death of Captain Waskow”](#)

PROCESS

Read the attached article by Ernie Pyle. Read actively, marking the text as you go. After reading, you should write a short reflection addressing the following questions.

- What were some of your initial reactions to the content of the piece?
- What are some of the examples of imagery that you think make Pyle’s piece effective?
- How do you think people on the homefront might view a piece like this? Do you think this human retelling of the experience of war is important? Should journalists just stick to the facts instead?
- What do you think writings like this one can tell us about the importance of good journalism, generally?