

The Home Front

HS733

Activity Introduction

Hey, I'm (NAME) and today we're gonna be talking about what was happening on the Home Front during World War Two.

Reading Passage Introduction

While most of the U.S. was uniting together to help win World War Two there was one group that was excluded.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor thousands of Japanese Americans were forced by the U.S. government to relocate to internment camps.

Hard to believe this happened in the United States? Well read the following passage and learn more about this sad chapter in U.S. history.

Video 1 - Introduction

World War Two caused thousands of Americans to relocate to other parts of the United States.

Most moved for jobs and better opportunities.

Watch this video and find out more about migration patterns in the U.S. during the war.

Video 1

During World War Two, Hollywood and the rest of the entertainment industry played a key part in boosting American's morale and maintaining their support for the war. The

federal government deemed Hollywood essential to the war effort. It set up the Office of War Information in 1942 to advise movie studios on the war content of films. You see movies were expected to be help mold attitudes and to record the events of the war.

For example, camera men and production specialists accompanied all major military units to film historic events, while many movie stars and studio executives joined the war effort in combat and support roles. In addition, Hollywood ceaselessly promoted war bond drives that were essential to the government's pay as you go policy for financing the war. Hollywood also produced thousands of training films for the Army, Navy and Marine Corps. Some feature films related to the war were made before the U.S. entered the conflict. For example, Charlie Chaplin's *The Great Dictator*, a film made in 1940, highlighted the cruelty and anti-Semitism of Nazi Germany. During the war, dozens of feature films were designed to remind the public of what they were fighting for and against.

Casablanca, about Nazis and refugees in French Morocco, *Destination Tokyo* about a secret submarine mission to Tokyo Bay and *Guadalcanal Diary* about the campaign on Guadalcanal. Hollywood camera men also filmed most of the major battles of the United States Navy in color. Even Disney characters sported Army and Navy headwear at the beginning of each cartoon during the war. Donald Duck thwarted the efforts of a Hitler like dictator in several cartoons. Legendary Hollywood Director, John Ford enlisted in the U.S. Navy and produced several films as Captain John Ford, including a film on the Battle of Midway, narrated by Henry Fonda.

Hollywood also managed the tours that war heroes took around the United States to help boost morale and sale war bonds. For example, Hollywood public relations managers accompanied the U.S. tours of the Marines who raised the American flag at

Iwo Jima and Richard Bong, America's number one fighter pilot in the Pacific. Besides feature films, Hollywood produced dozens of documentaries meant to function as propaganda, which is defined as any form of communication, a book, poster, movie, etcetera, designed to change people's opinions by appealing only to their emotions, not their reason.

Several of Hollywood's greatest directors, including John Ford, John Huston, William Wyler and Billy Wilder directed propaganda documentaries often at the request of the Office of War Information. The best known director to lend his talents to this effort was Frank Capra. He directed a series called Why We Fight, which included titles, such as Prelude to War, The Nazi Strike and the Battle of Britain. American's morale was bolstered by the constant positive message portrayed by the movies, even in the darkest times. More importantly, the United States held seven major war bond drives during the war and thanks in part to Hollywood's efforts, each was over subscribed. This meant that the country emerged from the war without a crippling war debt.

Video 1 – Recap

O.K. so some Americans moved for military duty. While others moved for economic opportunities.

Regardless of the reasons, mass migration on the home front resulted in the growth of many U.S. cities such as Detroit, San Diego, Portland and Seattle.

But most importantly it would forever change the cultural landscape of the United States.

Reading Passage Introduction

On the United States Home Front the war effort sucked up much of the nation's resources.

This meant that Americans could not purchase many common consumer goods during the war even though their wages had increased dramatically after the Depression.

Big stuff like steel and rubber and smaller stuff like matches and chocolate had to be conserved for the men and women overseas. Pretty crazy huh?

Just dying to learn more about the problems with supply and demand during World War Two? I thought so, read the following passage to find out more.

Video 2 - Introduction

During the war most Americans were trying their hardest to help the brave men abroad.

But among the more famous Americans giving their all to the war effort were actors and film directors.

Watch this video to see exactly how Hollywood helped fight the war.

Video 2

Wars are powerfully disruptive forces, often causing the mass movement of people. World War Two was no exception. Millions of American men and women left their regular jobs to serve in the armed forces, but millions of civilians were also uprooted or displaced.

During the war years, around 15 million men and several hundred thousand women relocated for military training. These figures represented one in nine of all Americans. Another 15 million civilians changed their county of residence during the same period. By the end of the war, one in five Americans had been swept up in a war time migration. On the home front, the migration tended to be from South to North and from East to West. Much of this latter migration was a result of the Dust Bowl. Now, let's recall the Dust Bowl was an ecological catastrophe in which drought combined with poor farming

practices brought about extensive topsoil erosion and loss of farmland. Farming families fled the worst affected regions in huge numbers. Three hundred thousand left Oklahoma and hundreds of thousands more left Texas, Kansas and Colorado. Most of them went to California and tried to find jobs as farm workers.

A second internal migration saw the movement of women in to jobs usually held by men. Traditionally, women in skilled jobs worked in a few areas, teaching, nursing, social work and the civil service. However, during World War Two, more than one million women filled jobs in the federal government. More than five million filled jobs in the private sector. With the enlistment of millions of men in the military, there was a need for women to fill industrial and manufacturing jobs. Around two million women, approximately 10% of the female work force worked in defense plants, building airplanes, ships, bombs, etcetera. These women were symbolized by Rosie the Riveter, a propaganda image created by the War Manpower Commission.

In an internal migration that had both immediate and long lasting affects, hundreds of thousands of African Americans left the South and moved North and West. In 1941, President Roosevelt signed an executive order that banned racial discrimination in the hiring or treatment of workers at defense plants and in the federal government. In response, hundreds of thousands of African Americans moved from the South to seek work in war plants. During the war years, 700,000 African Americans left the South. In 1943 alone, 120,000 moved from Texas and Louisiana to Los Angeles. Other major centers of war production included Detroit, Pittsburgh, Chicago, San Diego, Oakland, Seattle and Portland. In addition, African Americans worked for equal rights in the Double V campaign, which stood for victory over our enemies at home and victory over our enemies in the battlefields abroad.

In a movement similar to the African American migration, large numbers of Native Americans left the reservations during the war years. Around 44,000 joined the military out of a total population of 350,000. Another 40,000 men and women took jobs in defense industries. These experiences led some of them to settle in cities after the war. Others having seen the white man's way of life close up decided to return to the reservation.

In another effort to ease the wartime labor shortage, the United States and Mexico negotiated a treaty in 1942 that allowed thousands of Mexican laborers to work in the U.S. temporarily. The agreement led to the Bracero Program. Bracero comes from the Spanish word brazo, meaning arm. Braceros worked mainly in agriculture and on the railroads. By 1945, the program called for 50,000 farm workers and 75,000 railroad workers.

In the end, it's important to note that these wartime migrations permanently changed U.S. society. Huge numbers of women and members of ethnic minorities found themselves in jobs that had once been reserved for white men. In addition, populations throughout the country shifted and resulted in the reconfiguration of where and how people lived in the United States after the war.

Video 2 - Recap

So you see Hollywood played an important role during World War Two. It helped sell war bonds and made many pro-America movies during that time.

In addition, some major movie stars like Marlene Dietrich and Bob Hope went abroad to perform for the troops.

It's clear to see that during World War Two Hollywood took its job of bolstering moral at home and abroad very seriously.

End of Activity Review

Wow we covered a lot?!?!?

We took you all the way from the Roaring Twenties to the Great Depression and the New Deal and then finished with covering World War Two. Phew!! Mind Boggling!

Now lets look at the most important themes.

*The seemingly good times of the Roaring Twenties gave way to the greatest economic crisis the country has ever known, The Great Depression Franklin Delano Roosevelt attempted to remedy the Great Depression with the New Deal and restore the confidence of millions of Americans.

The Great Depression gave way to growing problems outside of the U.S.

*The United States tried to avoid intervention in the foreign conflict until the attack on Pearl Harbor made it unavoidable.

The United States and the other allied powers reigned victorious after World War Two, but the development of the atomic bomb cast a dark shadow over the postwar world to come.