The Allies Turn the Tide

Objectives
- Understand how nations devoted all of their resources to fighting World War II.
- Explain how Allied victories began to push back the Axis powers.
- Describe D-Day and the Allied advance toward Germany.

Terms, People, and Places
Rosie the Riveter  Stalingrad
aircraft carrier  D-Day
Dwight Eisenhower  Yalta Conference

Note Taking
Recognize Sequence  In a flowchart like the one below, sequence the events that turned the tide of the war towards the Allies.

```
1942  1943  1944

- Allies increase production.
- Jan. - Germans surrender at Stalingrad.
- 
- 
```

As 1942 began, the Allies were in trouble. German bombers flew unrelenting raids over Britain, and the German army advanced deep into the Soviet Union. In the Pacific, the Japanese onslaught seemed unstoppable. But helped by extraordinary efforts on the home front and a series of military victories, the tide was about to turn.

All-Out War
To defeat the Axis war machine, the Allies had to commit themselves to total war. Total war means nations devote all of their resources to the war effort.

Governments Increase Power  To achieve maximum war production, democratic governments in the United States and Great Britain increased their political power. They directed economic resources into the war effort, ordering factories to stop making cars or refrigerators and to turn out airplanes or tanks instead. Governments implemented programs to ration or control the amount of food and other vital goods consumers could buy. They raised money by holding war bond drives, in which citizens lent their government certain sums of money that would be returned with interest later. Prices and wages were also regulated. While the war brought some shortages and hardships, the increase in production ended the unemployment of the depression era.

Under the pressures of war, even democratic governments limited the rights of citizens, censored the press, and used propaganda to win public support for the war. In the United States and Canada, many citizens of Japanese descent lost their jobs, property, and civil rights. Many Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians were even interned in camps after their governments
decided that they were a security risk. The British took similar action against German refugees. Some 40 years later, both the United States and Canada provided former internees with reparations, or payment for damages, but for many the compensation came too late.

**Women Help Win the War** As men joined the military, millions of women around the world replaced them in essential war industry jobs. Women, symbolized by the character “Rosie the Riveter” in the United States, built ships and planes and produced munitions.

British and American women served in the armed forces in many auxiliary roles—driving ambulances, delivering airplanes, and decoding messages. In occupied Europe, women fought in the resistance. Marie Fourcade, a French woman, helped downed Allied pilots escape to safety. Soviet women served in combat roles. Soviet pilot Lily Litvak, for example, shot down 12 German planes before she herself was killed.

- **Checkpoint**  How did the Allies mobilize all of their resources for the war effort?

---

**The Allies Forge Ahead**

The years 1942–1943 marked the turning point of the war. The Allies won victories on four fronts—the Pacific, North Africa and Italy, the Soviet Union, and France—to push back the Axis tide.

**Japanese Navy Battered** In the Pacific, the Japanese suffered their first serious setback at the Battle of the Coral Sea. The battle lasted for five days in May 1942. For the first time in naval history, the enemy ships never even saw each other. Attacks were carried out by planes launched from aircraft carriers, or ships that transport aircraft and accommodate the take-off and landing of airplanes. The Japanese were prevented from seizing several important islands. More importantly, the Americans sank one Japanese aircraft carrier and several cruisers and destroyers.

This Allied victory was followed by an even more impressive win at the Battle of Midway in June 1942, which was also fought entirely from the air. The Americans destroyed four Japanese carriers and more than 250 planes. The battle was a devastating blow to the Japanese. After Midway, Japan was unable to launch any more offensive operations.

**The Big Three Plot Their Strategy** After the United States entered the war, the Allied leaders met periodically to hammer out their strategy.
In 1942, the “Big Three”—Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin—agreed to focus on finishing the war in Europe before trying to end the war in Asia. From the outset, the Allies distrusted one another. Churchill and Roosevelt feared that Stalin wanted to dominate Europe. Stalin believed the West wanted to destroy communism. None of the new Allies wanted to risk a breakdown in their alliance, however. At a conference in Tehran, Iran, in late 1943, Churchill and Roosevelt yielded to Stalin by agreeing to let the borders outlined in the Nazi-Soviet Pact stand, against the wishes of Poland’s government-in-exile. However, Stalin also wanted Roosevelt and Churchill to open a second front against Germany in Western Europe to relieve the pressure on the Soviet Union. Roosevelt and Churchill replied that they did not yet have the resources. Stalin saw the delay as a deliberate policy to weaken the Soviet Union.

**Allied Victory in North Africa** In North Africa, the British led by General Bernard Montgomery fought Rommel. After the fierce Battle of El Alamein in November 1942, the Allies finally halted the Desert Fox's advance. Allied tanks drove the Axis back across Libya into Tunisia.

Later in 1942, American General Dwight Eisenhower took command of a joint British and American force in Morocco and Algeria. Advancing on Tunisia from the west, the Allies trapped Rommel's army, which surrendered in May 1943.
**The Allies Advance Through Italy**

With North Africa under their control, the Allies were able to cross the Mediterranean into Italy. In July 1943, a combined British and American army landed first in Sicily and then in southern Italy. They defeated the Italian forces there in about a month. After the defeats, the Italians overthrew Mussolini and signed an armistice, but fighting did not end. Hitler sent German troops to rescue Mussolini and stiffen the will of Italians fighting in the north. For the next 18 months, the Allies pushed slowly up the Italian peninsula, suffering heavy losses against strong German resistance. Still, the Italian invasion was a decisive event for the Allies because it weakened Hitler by forcing him to fight on another front.

**Germans Defeated at Stalingrad**

A major turning point occurred in the Soviet Union. After their lightning advance in 1941, the Germans were stalled outside Moscow and Leningrad. In 1942, Hitler launched a new offensive. This time, he aimed for the rich oil fields of the south. His troops, however, got only as far as Stalingrad.

The Battle of Stalingrad was one of the costliest of the war. Hitler was determined to capture Stalin's namesake city, and Stalin was equally determined to defend it. The battle began when the Germans surrounded the city. As winter closed in, a bitter street-by-street, house-by-house struggle raged. A German officer wrote that soldiers fought for two weeks for a single building. Corpses “are strewn in the cellars, on the landings and the staircases,” he said. In November, the Soviets encircled their attackers. Trapped, without food or ammunition and with no hope of rescue, the German commander finally surrendered in January 1943.

After the Battle of Stalingrad, the Red Army took the offensive and drove the invaders out of the Soviet Union entirely. Hitler's forces suffered irreplaceable losses of both troops and equipment. By early 1944, Soviet troops were advancing into Eastern Europe.

---

**Checkpoint**

How did the Allies push back the Axis powers on four fronts?

---

**The Allies Push Toward Germany**

By 1944, the Western Allies were at last ready to open a second front in Europe by invading France. Allied leaders under Eisenhower faced the enormous task of planning the operation and assembling troops and supplies. To prepare the way for the invasion, Allied bombers flew constant missions over Germany. They targeted factories and destroyed aircraft that might be used against the invasion force. They also bombed railroads and bridges in France.

**The D-Day Assault**

The Allies chose June 6, 1944—known as D-Day—for the invasion of France. Just before midnight on June 5, Allied planes dropped paratroopers behind enemy lines. Then, at dawn, thousands of ships ferried 156,000 Allied troops across the English Channel. The troops
World War II in Europe and North Africa, 1942–1945

Map Skills  
Axis power reached its height in Europe in 1942. Then the tide began to turn.

1. Locate (a) Vichy France (b) Soviet Union (c) El Alamein (d) Normandy (e) Berlin

2. Place  Describe the extent of Axis control in 1942.

3. Make Inferences  How did geography both help and hinder Allied advances?

[Map of Europe and North Africa with key events and locations marked]
Churchill
Winston Churchill (1874–1965) was a staunch antisocialist and defender of the British Empire. As a member of Parliament, he loudly warned the British of the threat posed by Nazi Germany. After Neville Chamberlain's government failed to defend Norway from Hitler, Churchill replaced him as prime minister on May 10, 1940. Within seven weeks, France had surrendered, and Nazi forces threatened Britain. Churchill's courage and defiance steelled British resolve in the darkest days of the war when Britain stood alone against the Nazis. How did Churchill inspire the British people?

Roosevelt
In 1933, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882–1945) started his first term as president, promising to bring the United States out of the Great Depression. During his second term, FDR lent, and then gave, millions of dollars in war supplies to the struggling British. Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor quickly brought the United States into the war. From the start of American involvement, Roosevelt took the lead in establishing alliances among all countries fighting the Axis powers—including the Soviet Union. How did Roosevelt influence World War II before Pearl Harbor?

Stalin
Joseph Stalin (1879–1953) was born Joseph Dzhugashvili (joo gush vye leee). He changed his name to Stalin, meaning “man of steel,” after he joined the Bolshevik underground in the early 1900s. Stalin emerged as the sole ruler of the Soviet Union in the 1920s, and he maintained an iron grasp on the nation until his death in 1953. When Hitler's army invaded the Soviet Union and threatened Moscow in 1941, Stalin refused to leave the capital city. He eventually forced the Germans into retreat. Why would Churchill and Roosevelt have distrusted Stalin?

WITNESS HISTORY VIDEO
Watch Triumph at Normandy on the Witness History Discovery School™ video program to experience the planning and execution of the D-Day invasion.

Vocabulary Builder
incessant—in SES unt) adj. uninterrupted, ceaseless

Primary Source
"It all seemed unreal, a sort of dreaming while awake, men were screaming and dying all around me...I honestly could have walked the full length of the beach without touching the ground, they were that thickly strewn about."
—Melvin B. Farrell, War Memories

Still, the Allied troops clawed their way inland through the tangled hedgerows of Normandy. In early August, a massive armored division under American General George S. Patton helped the joint British and American forces break through German defenses and advance toward Paris. Meanwhile, other Allied forces sailed from Italy to land in southern France. In Paris, French resistance forces rose up against the occupying Germans. Under pressure from all sides, the Germans retreated. On August 25, the Allies entered Paris. Within a month, all of France was free.

Allies Continue to Advance By this time, Germany was reeling under incessant, round-the-clock bombing. For two years, Allied bombers had hammered military bases, factories, railroads, oil depots, and cities.
The goal of this kind of bombing was to cripple Germany's industries and destroy the morale of its civilians. In one 10-day period, bombing almost erased the huge industrial city of Hamburg, killing 40,000 civilians and forcing one million to flee their homes. In February 1945, Allied raids on Dresden, not an industrial target, but considered one of the most beautiful cities in Europe, killed as many as 136,000 people.

After freeing France, Allied forces battled toward Germany. As their armies advanced into Belgium in December, Germany launched a massive counterattack. At the bloody Battle of the Bulge, which lasted more than a month, both sides took terrible losses. The Germans were unable to break through. The battle delayed the Allied advance from the west, but only for six weeks. Meanwhile, the Soviet army battled through Germany and advanced on Berlin from the east. Hitler's support within Germany was declining, and he had already survived one assassination attempt by senior officers in the German military. By early 1945, the defeat of Germany seemed inevitable.

Uneasy Agreement at Yalta In February 1945, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin met again at Yalta, in the southern Soviet Union. Once again, the Big Three planned strategy in an atmosphere of distrust. Stalin insisted that the Soviet Union needed to maintain control of Eastern Europe to be able to protect itself from future aggression. Churchill and Roosevelt favored self-determination for Eastern Europe, which would give people the right to choose their own form of government. However, Churchill and Roosevelt needed Stalin's help to win the war.

At the Yalta Conference, the three leaders agreed that the Soviet Union would enter the war against Japan within three months of Germany's surrender. In return, Churchill and Roosevelt promised Stalin that the Soviets would take possession of southern Sakhalin Island, the Kuril Islands, and an occupation zone in Korea. They also agreed that Germany would be temporarily divided into four zones, to be governed by American, French, British, and Soviet forces. Stalin agreed to hold free elections in Eastern Europe. However, as you will read later, growing mistrust would later cause a split between the Allies.

Checkpoint What agreements did Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin come to at Yalta?

Vocabulary Builder inevitable—(in ih tuh bul) adj. unavoidable, inescapable

Assessment

Terms, People, and Places
1. For each term, person, or place listed at the beginning of the section, write a sentence explaining its significance.

Note Taking
2. Reading Skill: Recognize Sequence Use your completed timeline to answer the Focus Question: How did the Allies begin to push back the Axis powers?

Comprehension and Critical Thinking
3. Analyze Information How did democratic governments mobilize their economies for war?

4. Determine Relevance Explain why the battles of Midway, El Alamein, and Stalingrad were important turning points in the war.

5. Predict Consequences Why didn't the Yalta Conference lead to lasting unity among the Big Three leaders?

Progress Monitoring Online
For: Self-quiz with vocabulary practice
Web Code: nba-2931

Writing About History
Quick Write: Develop a Thesis A thesis statement summarizes the main idea of your research paper. The thesis statement should express an idea that can be defended or refuted. It should also be narrow enough to be addressed clearly in your writing.

Based on what you have read, write a thesis statement for an essay explaining the importance of the Battle of Stalingrad.