AP EURO IDENTIFICATIONS

CHAPTER 20: WORLD WAR ii

Section I. *Identify* and state the *Historical Significance* of the following:

1. Francisco Franco
2. Neville Chamberlain
3. Winston Churchill
4. Josef Goebbels
5. Heinrich Himmler

Section II. *Define* and state the *General Significance* of the following:

1. appeasement

Section III: *Describe* and state the *Historical Significance* of the following:

1. *Lebensraun*
2. Rome-Berlin Axis
3. Spanish Civil War
4. *Anschluss*
5. Munich Conference
6. Nazi-Soviet Pact
7. Blitzkrieg
8. Battle of Britain
9. The *Luftwaffe*
10. Operation Barbarossa
11. Third Reich
12. Pearl Harbor
13. Battle of Stalingrad
14. D-Day
15. Battle of the Bulge
16. “island-hopping”
17. Atomic bomb
18. The Holocaust
19. Vichy Regime of France
20. Atlantic Charter
21. Tehran Conference
22. Yalta Conference
23. Potsdam Conference

**CHAPTER 20 – WORLD WAR II**

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discusses the origins, course, and consequences of World War II. Shortly after Hitler’s rise to power in Germany in 1933, Europe’s nations started down the road to general war again. Throughout his career, Hitler based his actions on the belief that all the Germanic peoples should be united in Europe’s strongest nation. The new Germany should conquer Poland and the Ukraine and expel the inhabitants to make room for German settlers. Hitler never lost sight of this goal; he was, nonetheless, an opportunist, willing and able to change tactics to fit a changed situation.

To achieve his goal, which would almost certainly require a major war, Hitler had to free Germany from the military restrictions of Versailles. In 1935, he formally denounced the treaty’s disarmament provisions, began to create an army and air force, and allied with Mussolini’s Italy. The next year, Hitler took the important step of remilitarizing the Rhineland. By failing to react, Britain and France lost an important chance to stop Hitler cheaply. Their policy now became one of appeasement—that is, of willingness to meet Hitler’s goals on the assumption that they were limited and acceptable.

The chapter then details the German and Italian intervention in the Spanish Civil War in 1936, the bloodless *Anschluss* (or union of Germany and Austria in 1938) and the annexation of the Sudetenland as a result of the Munich conference, also in 1938. Hitler claimed that he had no further territorial demands in Europe, and British Prime Minister Chamberlain thought the agreement would bring “peace for our time.”

Despite Hitler’s pledge to respect Czech sovereignty, he had his troops occupy most of the rest of the country in 1939. Responding to the pressure of public opinion, Chamberlain guaranteed the security of Poland and sought Soviet aid in so doing. Stalin, however, signed a pact with Hitler, despite their ideological enmity, which secretly offered Stalin a new partition of Poland. Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, and general declarations of war quickly followed. By the end of June 1940, Poland, Scandinavia, the Low Countries, and France had fallen. Only Britain remained an enemy. The chapter then details Hitler’s air war against Britain, the invasion of Russia, and retreat from Moscow in 1942.

The American government was sympathetic with the plight of Britain, but the isolationism of its people prevented its entry into the war until the bombing of Pearl Harbor in late 1941 by Japan, an ally of Germany. America declared war on Japan, and Hitler declared war on the United States. Equally important to the allied cause, the Russians had halted the German advance at Stalingrad in late 1942 and assumed the offensive the next spring. In 1943, the United States invaded Italy and ended its cooperation with Germany. After massive aerial bombardment of Germany, the allies invaded northern France on June 6, 1944, and crossed the Rhine by March. The Germans surrendered unconditionally on May 8, 1945. The chapter then details the American victory over the Japanese in the Pacific and the use of the atomic bomb in the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Special attention is paid to racism and the Holocaust. The fate of the Polish Jewish community is examined. Explanations for the Holocaust are considered in order to encourage further thought.

World War II represented an effort of total war on the part of all belligerents. The home fronts were affected as well as the battlefields. The chapter now focuses on the changes in the role and responsibilities of government, shortages, bombings, propaganda campaigns, and political developments that affected the home fronts of Germany, France, Britain, and the Soviet Union. Of special importance was the impact of the “Blitz” on the British population during the winter and spring of 1940–1941. The collaboration of the Vichy regime and the French resistance are also noted, as is the unifying propaganda stressed by the Soviet Union for “The Great Patriotic War.” World War II was the most terrible war in history. It caused between 30 and 40 million deaths. As in 1919, the world hoped for a safe and secure peace in 1945, but a bitter split between the Soviet Union and its allies soon developed. The Soviet Union, not unexpectedly, wanted to install Communist governments in the east that were subordinate to Moscow. Britain and the United States opposed such expansion in Eastern Europe. The chapter discusses the various conferences (Atlantic Charter, Tehran, Yalta, and Potsdam) that led to a tenuous resolution of World War II and set the parameters for the Cold War to come.

OUTLINE

I. Again the Road to War (1933–1939)

A. Hitler’s Goals

B. Italy Attacks Ethiopia

C. Remilitarization of the Rhineland

D. The Spanish Civil War

E. Austria and Czechoslovakia

F. Munich

G. The Nazi-Soviet Pact

II. World War II (1939–1945)

A. The German Conquest of Europe

B. The Battle of Britain

C. The German Attack on Russia

D. Hitler’s Plans for Europe

E. Japan and the United States Enter the War

F. The Tide Turns

G. The Defeat of Nazi Germany

H. Fall of the Japanese Empire

I. The Cost of War

III. Racism and the Holocaust

A. The Destruction of the Polish Jewish Community

B. Polish Anti-Semitism Between the Wars

C. The Nazi Assault on the Jews of Poland

D. Explanations of the Holocaust

IV. The Domestic Fronts

A. Germany: From Apparent Victory to Defeat

B. France: Defeat, Collaboration, and Resistance

C. Great Britain: Organization for Victory

D. The Soviet Union: “The Great Patriotic War”

V. Preparations for Peace

A. The Atlantic Charter

B. Tehran: Agreement on a Second Front

C. Yalta

D. Potsdam

VI. In Perspective

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. How did World War I sow the seeds of World War II?
2. In what ways was World War II a “total” war?
3. What was the Holocaust?
4. What impact did World War II have on European society?
5. How did the Allies prepare for a postwar Europe?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What were Hitler’s foreign policy aims? Was he bent on conquest, or did he simply want to return Germany to its 1914 boundaries?
2. Why did Britain and France adopt a policy of appeasement in the 1930s? Did the West buy valuable time to rearm at Munich in 1938?
3. How was Hitler able to defeat France so easily in 1940? Why did the air war against Britain fail? Why did Hitler invade Russia? Could the invasion have succeeded?
4. Why did Japan attack the United States at Pearl Harbor? How important was American intervention in the war? Why did the United States drop atomic bombs on Japan? Was President Truman right to use the bombs?
5. How did experiences on the domestic front in Britain differ from those in Germany and France? What impact did “The Great Patriotic War” have on the people of the Soviet Union?
6. What was Hitler’s “final solution” to the Jewish question? Why did he want to eliminate Slavs as well? To what extent can it be said the Holocaust was the defining event of the twentieth century?