**Aim: Does war change a society for better or worse?**

**Topic: American Homefront during WWII (1941-1945)**

**Document #1 - Women during WWII**

In the days after December 7th, 1941, "Remember Pearl Harbor" became a battle cry for all of America as it entered World War II and America began a war in the Pacific Ocean against Japan and in Europe and Africa against Germany. By the summer of 1942, men disappeared almost completely from the work place, having been drafted or enlisted into the US military. With men being shipped overseas by the thousand, women were needed to step in to fill factory jobs, as well as to beef up hospitals, and even lend a hand to the military. During WWII, over 6 million women took wartime jobs in factories or filling in for men on farms, 3 million women volunteered with the Red Cross, and over 200,000 women served the military as nurses or other needed jobs. Although many women were unused to doing this tough work (and instead after WWI went back to being housewives), to some of the new female factory workers, however, the job boom was a godsend. The depression of the 1930's had left many families still not completely financially stable. Women moved into cities and crammed into tiny apartments with several roommates to make some extra money. For those families that were hit hardest during the depression, the chance for a wife to earn a paycheck while her husband was getting his overseas pay was almost a lucky break.

*"Those of us who have seen and know the work they are doing throughout the military establishment of our country and in our foreign stations have only admiration and respect for the spirit, the dignity, and the courage they have shown."*

 *– President Franklin Roosevelt*

**Document #2 – WW2’s effect on African Americans**

To help win the war, President Roosevelt created the **Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC)** by signing[**Executive Order**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Executive_order_%28United_States%29) **8802**. It said "there shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or government because of race, creed, color, or national origin". In 1943 Roosevelt greatly strengthened FEPC with a new executive order, #9346. It required that all government contracts have a non-discrimination clause. FEPC was the most significant breakthrough ever for Blacks and women on the job front. FEPC rules applied and guaranteed equality of employment rights. The African American community in the United States resolved on a **Double “V” Campaign**: **V**ictory over [fascism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fascism) abroad, and **V**ictory over discrimination at home. Large numbers migrated from poor Southern farms to munitions centers. In addition, over 900,000 black soldiers served very bravely overseas in World War 2, although many still fought in segregated units (the most famous unit was the air force unit of the **Tuskegee Airmen** who never lost a plane in their battles over Europe, and in the Navy African Americans were only mess-man or stewards). In 1948, 3 years after the war, President Harry Truman **desegregated** and **fully integrated** all army units.

Despite some progress, racial tensions still remained. In the Port Chicago Mutiny, an ammunition explosion on July 17, 1944 at the navy’s ammunition base in California killed over 200 African American ammunition handlers. 258 black sailors refused to return to work when operations resumed, citing racism and unsafe conditions. Many were brought to court and received harsh sentences. Only protests by the black press and the NAACP after WW2 got their sentences overturned. The rural to urban migration caused overcrowding and racial tension; cities such as [Chicago](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chicago); [Detroit](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Detroit) and [Harlem](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harlem) experienced [race riots](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Race_riot) in 1943.

**Document #3**

In fear that the Japanese would spy and sabotage America, Franklin Roosevelt issued **Executive Order 9066** which put Japanese Americans living in Americans living in California and the West into **relocation and internment camps** (small military-guarded communities just for Japanese). This forced 112,000 Japanese-Americans to leave their homes, jobs, businesses and farms; causing misery and economic loss. One Japanese-American, Fred Korematsu, violated the order and was arrested and convicted. However, he sued in the Supreme Court; saying that the action by the government was unconstitutional; the case was known as ***Korematsu v. U.S., 1944***.

The Supreme Court ruled 6-3 against Korematsu, with Chief Justice Black saying,

*“He was excluded because we are at war with the Japanese Empire, because the military authorities feared an invasion of our West Coast and felt constrained (forced) to take proper security measures, because they decided that the military urgency of the situation demanded that all citizens of Japanese ancestry be segregated from the West Coast temporarily.”*

**Document #4 - The economy**

 The start of World War II ended the Great Depression as millions went to serve overseas and millions more were needed in all of the wartime industries at home. To help support the war, citizens were encouraged to buy **war bonds**. This meant that people gave the government money now, and then the government gave them double in a few years (example, if you buy a $50 war bond, you give the government $25 but then in 7 years, the government gives you $50). Companies would earn merit flags from the United States if all of their employees were part of the 10% club (they gave 10% of their paycheck to war bonds). Many household products and the materials that made them were needed to produce military goods. This meant that people had to **ration (save and limit the amount they used) .** People also did not use regular supplies like rubber, nylon plastic, aluminum, regular grade beef, and used car pools to save gas as all of these raw materials were sent to the army. When the war was over, people had saved up from both serving overseas and at home, and demanded all of the consumer products they could not have the four years of the war and the whole Great Depression. The American economy began to boom! In addition, there was a **baby boom** as people could now afford to have more children. However, for many of the millions of the returning veterans, life was difficult returning home and readjusting to civilian life and civilian jobs after many years overseas. For all of their sacrifice in fighting against dictators who tried to rule the world, the generation of veterans that fought in World War II was known as “The Greatest Generation.”

**Task: Complete each in 2-3 bullet points and then answer the exit ticket in one full TEAL paragraph using at least 3 specifics from your graphic organizer.**

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| --- | --- |
| **Station** | **Evaluate the Impact World War II had on American Society:**  |
| **Women** |  |
| **African Americans** |  |
| **Japanese Americans**  |  |
| **The Economy** |  |

**End Task: Overall, did World War II have a more positive or negative impact on American society?**

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