World War II History

Use this key to check answers and read the explanations.

1. Germany invaded which country on September 1, 1939, beginning World War II in Europe?

A. Poland
B. Norway
C. Belgium
D. Greece

Correct answer: A. Poland
Germany invaded Poland on September 1. Britain and France declared war on Germany two days later.

2. Who addressed the U.S. Congress on December 8, 1941, asking it to recognize a state of war with Japan?

A. Herbert Hoover
B. Harry S. Truman
C. Franklin D. Roosevelt
D. Dwight D. Eisenhower

Correct answer: C. Franklin D. Roosevelt
Roosevelt addressed Congress the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Congress declared war against Japan that day.

3. A British newspaper calls May 8, 1945, VE Day. What do the letters VE stand for?

A. Veterans of Europe
B. Victory in Europe
C. Voluntary Evacuation
D. Victory of the Empire

Correct answer: B. Victory in Europe
VE Day marked Victory in Europe, when people celebrated Germany’s surrender. The conflict against Japan continued.

4. A shopper in wartime Britain brings both money and a ration book. What was the ration book for?

A. Setting a weekly wage for each worker
B. Recording the sales tax paid by each shop
C. Collecting voter registrations for local elections
D. Allocating limited goods across households

Correct answer: D. Allocating limited goods across households
Ration books helped distribute scarce essentials, including food, among the population.

5. How did Prime Minister Robert Menzies announce Australia’s entry into the war on September 3, 1939?

A. In a televised interview
B. In a radio broadcast
C. In a cinema newsreel
D. In a railway station announcement

Correct answer: B. In a radio broadcast
Menzies spoke over national and commercial radio stations. The Australian War Memorial preserves a recording.

6. Britain and France declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939. How much later did Canada formally declare war on Germany?

A. One week later
B. On the same day
C. One day later
D. One month later

Correct answer: A. One week later
Canada’s declaration was issued on September 10 after a special session of Parliament. September 10 is seven days after September 3.

7. Who joined Roosevelt and Churchill at the 1943 Cairo Conference and was named alongside them in the Allied communiqué?

A. Harry S. Truman
B. Joseph Stalin
C. Charles de Gaulle
D. Chiang Kai-shek

Correct answer: D. Chiang Kai-shek
The statement named Roosevelt, Churchill, and Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang represented China at Cairo.

8. During World War II, what two victories did the U.S. ‘Double V’ campaign seek?

A. Victory in two presidential elections
B. Victory in Europe and the Pacific only
C. Victory over fascism abroad and racism at home
D. Victory over food and fuel shortages

Correct answer: C. Victory over fascism abroad and racism at home
The campaign connected the fight against fascism abroad with the fight against racial discrimination in the United States.

9. Where did Japanese representatives sign the formal Instrument of Surrender on September 2, 1945?

A. Aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay
B. At the United Nations conference in San Francisco
C. In the White House in Washington
D. At the Potsdam conference site in Germany

Correct answer: A. Aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay
The official record places the signing aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay on September 2.

10. A returning U.S. veteran wanted to attend college after World War II. Which wartime law helped pay eligible veterans' tuition?

A. The Selective Training and Service Act
B. The Lend-Lease Act
C. The National Labor Relations Act
D. The Servicemen's Readjustment Act

Correct answer: D. The Servicemen's Readjustment Act
The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, known as the G.I. Bill, provided education benefits as part of the return to civilian life.

11. Roosevelt and Churchill met in Newfoundland in 1941 and issued a statement of shared aims. Which document fits those clues?

A. The United Nations Charter
B. The Potsdam Declaration
C. The Atlantic Charter
D. The Munich Agreement

Correct answer: C. The Atlantic Charter
The Atlantic Charter followed the Newfoundland meeting and set out shared U.S. and British aims in August 1941.

12. A 1939 British government memo gave schoolchildren priority for evacuation. How did the scheme say these children would normally travel?

A. In family groups led by parents only
B. In organized groups led by teachers
C. In pairs with one older pupil assigned to each younger one
D. Individually to a destination each child chose

Correct answer: B. In organized groups led by teachers
The scheme listed schoolchildren as a priority when organized into groups under their teachers. It separately listed younger children with a parent or other caregiver.

13. One U.S. record authorized lending supplies to other governments in March 1941. Another shows a declaration of war against Japan in December 1941. What does that sequence establish?

A. The aid program began after Japan surrendered
B. The United States declared war before setting up aid
C. Both records came from the same congressional vote
D. The United States provided for aid before it formally entered the war

Correct answer: D. The United States provided for aid before it formally entered the war
Congress passed Lend-Lease in March 1941 while the United States was still officially neutral. The declaration against Japan came in December.

14. The 1944 Bretton Woods Final Act contains the articles of agreement for which two postwar economic institutions?

A. The International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
B. The International Monetary Fund and the International Labour Organization
C. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the League of Nations
D. The International Court of Justice and the World Health Organization

Correct answer: A. The International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
The Final Act includes the founding agreements for the IMF and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the original World Bank institution.

15. Which sequence puts four milestones of 1945 in the correct order, earliest to latest?

A. VE Day, Japan’s formal surrender, UN Charter signing, UN Charter enters into force
B. UN Charter signing, VE Day, UN Charter enters into force, Japan’s formal surrender
C. VE Day, UN Charter signing, Japan’s formal surrender, UN Charter enters into force
D. Japan’s formal surrender, VE Day, UN Charter signing, UN Charter enters into force

Correct answer: C. VE Day, UN Charter signing, Japan’s formal surrender, UN Charter enters into force
The dates are May 8 for VE Day, June 26 for the Charter signing, September 2 for the formal surrender, and October 24 for the Charter to enter into force.