



Lesson Plans

In this unit, students study the World War II home front. After an introduction to the origins of the war, they study the effects of the war on the U.S. economy; citizen participation in the war effort through saving, rationing, and resource drives; the fear of invasion or air attack on the mainland; and the imprisonment of Japanese citizens in internment camps. Many excellent primary sources related to these topics are available online, including oral histories. The BHH site provides specific resources for several lessons, but for other lessons we link to a variety of online resources. Iowa educators may wish to make use of a series of Cedar Rapids Gazette newspaper articles on the Iowa home front. The series, produced in 2001, is a retrospective on Iowa WWII home front history and provides various oral history interviews and photographs. This resource is on the internet at <http://www.gazetteonline.com/special/homefront/home.htm>

For this unit, we are especially fortunate to have a resource that connects children with the real experiences of a WW II soldier. The Jones Family Letters trace the experiences of Joe Jones, a U.S. soldier in the WW II European war theater. The letters are posted online; by printing and reading them aloud to your students you can draw your class into an ongoing serialized account of one soldier's experience. Students' interest in Joe's saga may deepen your class' general interest in WW II and the home front.

As a final home front project, students develop a presentation that incorporates the themes and sources they study throughout the unit. For any of the projects, a variety of student learning styles should be encouraged; young musicians, artists, builders and writers all can find ways to express and enhance learning through their individual talents. In preparation for their eventual work on the projects, students should keep all of their work in a folder designated for this unit.

Activity 1: WWII Background

Content Goals:

- ❖ Introduction to the causes and military actions of WWII.

Process Goals:

- ❖ View video for basic understanding.

Centerpiece:

- ❖ Video: **World War II: Video Quiz**



Process:

- ❖ View: **World War II: Video Quiz**
- ❖ Distribute oral histories for students to read silently. Ask for student volunteers to share the stories with the class, re-telling in their own words rather than reading the accounts outright. <OR> Read aloud oral histories to the class.
- ❖ Begin a timeline for the unit. Allow students to suggest dates to place on the line. You may wish to print copies of a web-based timeline and ask students to choose events from the line they wish to include on their own line.
- ❖ Conclude class by reading aloud to the students the background of Joe Jones' military service and his first letter home:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR1.HTM> and
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR2.HTM>

Resources:

- ❖ Video: **World War II: Video Quiz**
- ❖ Butcher paper for timeline
- ❖ Teacher Websites
 - European children's oral histories:
<http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/chatback/english/memories/people.html>
 - Oral histories from Europeans in WW II:
<http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/chatback/english/map/clickmap.html>
 - Band of Brothers local histories:
http://www.hbo.com/apps/band/site/client/search/search_stories.jsp#revisit
 - WW II Timeline:
<http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/timeline/ww2time.htm>
 - Background on Joe Jones' military service:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR1.HTM>
 - Joe Jones' first letter home:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR2.HTM>

Product:

- ❖ WW II Timeline



Activity 2: What is a Home Front?

Content Goals:

- ❖ Students learn the definitions of war front and home front.
- ❖ Students are introduced to the WWII home front.

Process Goals:

- ❖ Reading for knowledge.
- ❖ Students create a KWL chart.

Centerpiece:

- ❖ Book: Children of the WWII Home Front

Process:

- ❖ Discussion
 - What is a war front?
 - What is a home front?
- ❖ Read Children of the WWII Home Front
 - This may be assigned as homework over the previous week or read in class, aloud or individually.
- ❖ Timeline: add dates for the home front. Again, ask students to choose dates or illustrations to place on the line.
- ❖ Conclude class by reading Joe Jones' Training at Croft letter.

Resources:

- ❖ Book: Children of the WWII Home Front
- ❖ Joe Jones' Training at Croft Letter:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR3.HTM>

Product:

- ❖ Timeline additions



Activity 3: WWII Home Front

Content Goals:

- ❖ Understanding of various aspects of life on the WWII home front.

Process Goals:

- ❖ Students identify major historical themes in a documentary.
- ❖ Students begin KWL charts.

Centerpiece:

- ❖ Video: **America Goes To War: WW II (The Home Front Segment)**

Process:

- ❖ View: **America Goes To War: WW II (The Home Front Segment)**
- ❖ Pause the movie in strategic places to emphasize key points for students.
- ❖ Begin a KWL chart. Encourage students to reflect on what they've learned from the videos and their reading. Create a chart with the class as a whole but also ask students to individually write up their charts after the class discussion.
- ❖ Optional activity: Slang of the 1940's – <http://nfo.net/usa/slang.html>. Some of the terms listed on the website may include mild curse words. If you select from the list for your students, however, you could create a lively discussion. Begin by asking them to guess the meaning of a few slang terms. Do we still use any of the same slang terms today? If not, what are the new expressions for the concepts on the '40's slang list?
- ❖ Conclude class with Joe Jones' Hurricane letter.

Resources:

- ❖ Video: **America Goes To War: WW II (The Home Front Segment)**
- ❖ Teacher website: Slang terms of the 1940's: <http://nfo.net/usa/slang.html>
- ❖ KWL charts – one copy per student
- ❖ Joe Jones' Hurricane letter:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR4.HTM>



Product:

- ❖ KWL charts: these are found in the General Resources section of the BHH website.

Activity 4: Industrial Production Kicks into High Gear

Content Goals:

- ❖ The U.S. and its Allies' military and domestic needs placed great demands on factories.
- ❖ The war created many new jobs for Americans.
- ❖ The war increased women's participation in the labor force.

Process Goals:

- ❖ Students analyze posters for what they can tell us about the history of the time when they were made.
- ❖ Students synthesize knowledge into posters of their own.
- ❖ Students study statistics for historical understanding.

Centerpiece:

- ❖ Home Front labor posters, Women & Work in WW II worksheet.

Process:

- ❖ Assuming a detective role, students examine posters encouraging Americans to support the war by stepping into new jobs. You may wish to do this exercise with the class as a whole, by projecting the posters onto an overhead and guiding students through the NARA analysis worksheet questions. If students are quite confident exploring documents using the NARA questions, You may wish to assign the work in groups, with each group analyzing one or two posters.
- ❖ When you have analyzed several posters, lead a class discussion on the following questions. Tell students you don't wish them to raise their hands, but you will call on them at random. They should try; this isn't a quiz but a discussion and a process to help them learn how to read the past using objects created at that time.

- What do the posters tell us about work and available jobs during the war years?
 - Was work hard to come by?
 - What sorts of jobs were available?
 - Who was being hired?
 - Why did factories need so many workers?
 - Did the need for labor bring new people into the work force or into different jobs than they previously held? On what do you base your answer?
- ❖ Continuing in their detective role, students study the war's impact on women in the labor force. This is a good activity in which to have students work in pairs. Use the Women & Work worksheet as a guide for this student activity. When students have completed the questions, discuss their conclusions to help them understand the statistics and their implications.
- ❖ Students make posters of their own for the war effort.
- ❖ Acquaint students with the parameters of the final project.
- Distribute an idea list for project formats. A sample list is provided on the BHH home front unit under “Unit Resources”.
 - Discuss the importance of including as many unit concepts as possible in the projects.
 - You may wish to have students work alone, in pairs or in groups, or to allow individuals to choose between those options.
- ❖ Conclude class with Joe Jones' Shipping Out letter:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR4.HTM>

Resources:

- ❖ Wartime posters – provided on BHH website.
- ❖ NARA poster analysis worksheets – found in the “General Resources” view on BHH website under Modified NARA worksheets.
- ❖ Paper or poster board & markers or paints for student posters.
- ❖ Joe Jones: Shipping Out letter:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR4.HTM>
- ❖ Teacher websites: <http://www.teacheroz.com/WWIIHomefront.htm>
- ❖ BHH worksheet: Women & Work in WW II – find under “Unit Resources” on the Home Front unit view.
- ❖ Additional labor statistics are available on the Cedar Rapids Gazette website:
<http://www.gazetteonline.com/special/homefront/home.htm>



- See December 9th – Employment statistics

Product:

- ❖ Women & Work worksheets
- ❖ Students' wartime workforce posters

Activity 5: The War Effort

Content Goals:

- ❖ Students learn about the experience of people who had family members serving as soldiers in the war.
- ❖ Students learn citizens contributed to the war effort by rationing various supplies and holding scrap drives.

Process Goals:

- ❖ Students analyze historic posters for knowledge.
- ❖ Students take social action related to their study topic.
- ❖ Students read statistics for historical knowledge.

Centerpiece:

- ❖ Wartime rationing and scrap-metal drive posters and photos, CRG – Rationing statistics and family excerpt.

Process:

- ❖ If available online, read aloud and discuss CRG article: December 21st – **Families Torn by War --**
<http://www.gazetteonline.com/special/homefront/home.htm>
- ❖ Group work:
 - What was rationed? Students examine posters to make a list of things that were rationed during the war.
 - How much was rationed? If available online, students read the CRG statistics from Dec 8 and 11 to make a list of how much was rationed.
- ❖ What do we do today that reminds you of rationing and saving during the war?
 - A student may suggest recycling. If not, teacher should mention it.

- Optional service learning project: Class chooses a charity or conservation drive for the semester.
- ❖ Optional Activity: Students may wish to make at home some of the recipes listed in the websites below. If they do this during the final project presentation days, they can serve what they make as a treat to help make the presentations a special event.
- ❖ Conclude with Joe Jones' Bastonge letter:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR6.HTM>

Resources:

- ❖ Rationing and scrap drive posters – on BHH website.
- ❖ Joe Jones' Bastonge letter:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR6.HTM>
- ❖ Teacher websites:
 - Rationing Website:
<http://motlc.wiesenthal.com/albums/palbum/p08/a0435p5.html>
 - Ration books:
http://www.scc.rutgers.edu/njwomenshistory/Period_5/ration.htm and
<http://ingrimayne.saintjoe.edu/econ/AllocatingRationing/MoreRationingPicts.html>
 - Recipes and Rationing: <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5055/>
 - Wartime Europe Recipes:
<http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/chatback/english/food/recipes.html>
 - Gold Star Moms: <http://www.montney.com/mflag.htm>
 - CRG – <http://www.gazetteonline.com/special/homefront/home.htm>
 - December 21st – Families torn by war
 - December 8th and December 11th -- Rationing lists

Product:

- ❖ Student lists of rationed items

Activity 6: Don't You Know There's a War On?

Content Goals:

- ❖ Students are introduced to an imaginary child's perspective on home front life.
- ❖ Students review their knowledge.



Process Goals:

- ❖ Students read to review their knowledge.
- ❖ KWL update.

Centerpiece:

- ❖ **Don't You Know There's a War On?**

Process:

- ❖ Read aloud and discusses **Don't You Know There's a War On?**
- ❖ Before reading, you should point out the author seems to assume readers have quite a bit of knowledge about the home front before they read his book. As you read the book, stop after those pages that assume prior knowledge on the part of the reader and ask the students about those details.
- ❖ This provides a review of the unit to date and gives students a sense of being in-the-know about home front details they've learned.
- ❖ Update KWL sheets
- ❖ Read background about the Battle of the Bulge on Joe Jones website:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR7.HTM>

Resources:

- ❖ Book: **Don't You Know There's a War On?**
- ❖ Battle of the Bulge on Joe Jones website:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR7.HTM>

Product:

- ❖ Updated KWL sheets

Activity 7: Fear of Invasion/Bombing Raids

Content Goals:

- ❖ Students learn people on the home front feared invasion or bombings would happen in the U.S.



Process Goals:

- ❖ Students read oral history accounts for knowledge.
- ❖ Students study song lyrics and government propaganda to learn about government policies and imagine civilian experiences in wartime.

Centerpiece:

- ❖ Songs, and CRG - oral histories.

Process:

- ❖ If available, read aloud accounts found in the CRG Dec.14/19/21/30th.
- ❖ Read song lyrics found on <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5148/>
- ❖ Optional – analyze posters and pamphlets found on <http://tvh.bfn.org/civil.html>
- ❖ Read Anne's letter to Joe:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR8.HTM>

Resources:

- ❖ Teacher Websites
 - Anne's letter to Joe :
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR8.HTM>
 - Song lyrics : <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5148/>
 - Civil (homeland) defense resources: <http://tvh.bfn.org/civil.html>
 - CRG articles -- <http://www.gazetteonline.com/special/homefront/home.htm>
December 14/ 19/ 21/ 30th

Activity 8: Japanese Internment

Content Goals:

- ❖ Students learn the U.S. government seized the property of and imprisoned Japanese-Americans for the duration of the War.
- ❖ Students learn about some of the experiences of Japanese-American citizens imprisoned in WWII.

Process Goals:

- ❖ Students learn to tell a story, or history, using photographs.

Centerpiece:

- ❖ **Children of the Relocation Camps**, internment document sets.

Process:

- ❖ Read aloud: **Children of the Relocation Camps**.
- ❖ In groups, students receive a set of documents.
 - Direct students to tell the story of Japanese internment using the documents.
 - Each group of documents tells one piece of the story.
 - Pre-evacuation life
 - Preparing to leave for the camps.
 - Traveling to the camps.
 - Life in the camps.
 - Students tell the history of internment using the documents. This may be done using story boards accompanied by a written story.
 - As an additional activity, before they are pasted to a storyboard, documents from each piece of the story may be scrambled for the students to place in their correct order. This would create a chronological puzzle challenge for students, while providing a simulation of actual research.
- ❖ Timeline: add Japanese internment dates. Students again should suggest events/dates. You may wish to refer also to the timeline at the end of **Children of the Relocation Camps**.
- ❖ Students begin work on their final projects.
- ❖ Read Prisoners' Captured, another letter from Anne to Joe:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR9.HTM>

Resources:

- ❖ BHH website photo sets
- ❖ Prisoners' Captured letter on Joe Jones site:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR9.HTM>
- ❖ Website: Children of the Camps: <http://www.children-of-the-camps.org/history/index.html>
- ❖ Book: **Children of the Relocation Camps**
- ❖ Butcher paper for story boards



Products:

- ❖ Japanese internment storyboards

Activity 9: The End of the War

Content Goals:

- ❖ Students learn about the home front at war's end.

Process Goals:

- ❖ Students imagine a historic moment and express through creative-writing.

Centerpiece:

- ❖ Letter to Joe Jones from his father.

Process:

- ❖ Read aloud Joe Jones' VE Day Letter from his father:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR10.HTM>
- ❖ Optional creative writing activity -- Students write end-of-war stories based on their reading. You may wish to put a whimsical spin on this activity by suggesting students imagine themselves, their family and town back in 1945. What happens when their town/school/family hears the news, "The War is over"? What changes would people have anticipated? Ask students to imagine: How would you have felt?
- ❖ Students continue work on their final projects.

Resources:

- ❖ Letter to Joe Jones from his father:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR10.HTM>

Product:

- ❖ End of the war – creative writing stories.



Activity 10: The Final Projects

Content Goals:

- ❖ Review of the unit

Process Goals:

- ❖ Students create a web map that incorporates WW II themes.
- ❖ Students complete KWL chart.
- ❖ Students demonstrate their learning and ability to create historical narratives.

Process:

- ❖ To review what students have learned and pull together the story of the U.S. WW II home front, the class makes a mind map together of the unit themes.
 - Draw a basic spider map on the chalkboard.
 - As students brainstorm themes, ask them to direct where the themes should be charted/categorized in relation to one another.
 - Direct students to take notes/copy the web as a reference for their projects – their projects should incorporate as many unit themes as possible.
- ❖ Students work on their final projects.
- ❖ Students present their projects to the class.
- ❖ Class completes its KWL chart – What have we learned?
- ❖ Joe's last (online) letter home – Still in Europe:
<http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR11.HTM>

Resources:

- ❖ Students' unit folders.
- ❖ Materials for creating final projects
- ❖ Last Joe Jones letter: <http://www.aboutjonesfamily.com/PAGES/WAR11.HTM>

Product:

- ❖ Final project presentations