



Lesson Title:

The War in the Pacific

Subjects

U. S. History, World History

Suggested time

One 50-minute class period

Grade Level

7-12

Essential Questions

How did improvements in technology benefit the Allies? What is the strategy the Allies took to advance toward Japan?

Objective

To illustrate how the advancement of technology played a significant part in the Allies victory over Japan.

Overview

This lesson provides an overview of key battles in the Pacific Theatre of World War II and the importance of specific technologies developed to cover the expanse of geographical locations of the battles. The students will be assigned a Google Earth assignment to be completed individually.

Materials

- *Chronicles of Courage: Stories of Wartime and Innovation* videos:
 - ["Flying Tigers"](#)
 - ["The Doolittle Raid"](#)
 - ["F6F Hellcat"](#)
 - ["Torpedo Bomber"](#)
 - ["Flying the Beam"](#)
- [Lesson](#)
- [Photograph of Flag Raising on Iwo Jima](#)
- [Google Earth Individual Assignment](#)
- [Rubric](#)
- [Standards](#)
- [NCSS C3 Framework](#)

Warm-Up Activity:

As a quick review of the European Theatre, ask the students -

Who is the leader of-

- Italy? (*Benito Mussolini*)
- Germany? (*Adolph Hitler*)
- The Soviet Union? (*Joseph Stalin*)
- France? (*Charles de Gaulle*)
- Great Britain? (*Winston Churchill*)
- The United States (*Franklin D. Roosevelt/Harry S Truman – became president on April 12, 1945 after President Roosevelt dies of a massive stroke.*)

Key Events –

- When did Germany invade Poland? (*September 1, 1931*)
- Which country won the first battle against Nazi Germany? (*Great Britain*)
- Which Axis country led a surprise attack against the United States? (*Japan*)
- Where did the attack occur? (*Hawaiian Islands – Pearl Harbor*)
- When did the attack on Pearl Harbor occur? (*December 7, 1941*)
- What is the significance of Pearl Harbor? (*the United States entered World War II*)

Exploring the Videos

The Eyewitnesses Tell the Story:

By interviewing people who have experienced courageous events, the *Chronicles of Courage: Stories of Wartime and Innovation* series keeps history alive for current generations to explore. Oral history lets the audience hear history directly from those that experienced it and can bring the past to life with powerful information that print resources may miss. The technologies and solutions presented are information few today have and are contextualized by experts that continue to work with and preserve this classic technology.

[“Flying Tigers”](#)

About the Video:

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 launches America into World War II. This video is one of 20 short videos in the series *Chronicles of Courage: Stories of Wartime and Innovation* that detail certain events and technology of the war. “Flying Tigers” tells the story of a small group of American volunteer pilots known as the Flying Tigers who use their Curtiss P-40 Tomahawks to score some of the first U.S. victories against the Japanese in China.

Video Voices:

David Lee “Tex” Hill

Hill became a U.S. Naval Aviator in 1939, but later was recruited to join the 1st American Volunteer Group known as the “Flying Tigers” – their mission was to prevent Japan from advancing throughout China.

Cory Graff

Graff is the Military Aviation Curator at Flying Heritage Collection – a military aviation and tank museum located near Seattle, Washington.

Language Support

To aid those with limited English proficiency or others who need help focusing on the video, make available the transcript for the video. Click the transcript tab on the side of the video window, then copy and paste into a document for student reference.

[“The Doolittle Raid”](#)

About the Video:

Four months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States launches a top-secret mission to bomb Japan. Led by Colonel James Doolittle, this risky assignment calls for American bomber planes to launch from an aircraft carrier in the sea – something that had never been done before.

Video Voices:

Lt. Col. Richard “Dick” Cole

Lt. Col. Cole was a member of the elite group of “Doolittle Raiders” which was a team of airmen assigned to bomb Japan in response to Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor. The success of the Doolittle Raiders became a huge morale booster for the United States early in World War II.

Dr. Eric Sheppard

Dr. Sheppard, dean of the Hampton University School of Engineering and Technology has achieved numerous awards including becoming an Associated Fellow with the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA).

Language Support

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[“F6F Hellcat”](#)

About the Video:

After years of destructive fighting in World War II, the U.S. Navy’s Fast Carrier Task Force is determined to defeat the Japanese military. Their fiercest weapon is the F6F Hellcat – an airplane designed with a unique folding wing called a sto-wing, allowing more planes to fit on an aircraft carrier and providing the U.S. with a stronger defense.

Video Voices:

Robert Turnell

Turnell served in Fighter Squadron VF-81 from March 1, 1944 until the end of World War II. He flew an F6F Hellcat. He retired from the Navy with the rank of commander.

Dr. Rebecca Grant

Dr. Grant is a Military Aviation Expert, founder and President of IRIS Independent Resource, the Director of the Washington Security Forum, and a contributor to Air Force Magazine and The Military Channel.

Language Support

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[“Torpedo Bomber”](#)

About the Video:

“Torpedo Bomber” details a United States Navy mission to intercept the Imperial Japanese Navy in the Pacific Ocean in order to liberate the Philippines from Japanese occupation during World War II.

Video Voices:

Bernard “Ben” St. John

Ben St. John is a U.S. Navy pilot who flies the Grumman TBF/TBM Avenger, a torpedo bomber on the USS Intrepid. He is part of the attack against one of the largest warships ever put to sea, the Japanese super battleship *Musashi*.

Gregory Fletcher

Gregory Fletcher is a former naval aviator and the author of the book, *Intrepid Aviators, The True Story of USS Intrepid’s Torpedo Squadron 18 and Its Epic Clash With the Superbattleship Musahi*.

[“Flying the Beam”](#)

About the Video:

After the United States and its Allies gain control of Iwo Jima during World War II, they use it as strategic air base for attacks against Japan’s main islands. But the missions to Japan and back are long and dangerous for pilots like Jerry Yellin. He describes a low-tech but innovative way they navigate over the daunting Pacific.

Video Voices:

Captain Jerry Yellin

Captain Yellin joined the Army Air Corps on his 18th birthday, which was two months after Pearl Harbor was attacked. He remained in the Army for duration of World War II and has the unique distinction of having flown the final combat mission of World War II on August 14, 1945, the day the war ended.

Cory Graff

Cory Graff is the Military Aviation Curator at Flying Heritage Collection – a military aviation and tank museum located near Seattle, Washington.

Language Support

To aid those with limited English proficiency or others who need help focusing on the video, make available the transcript for the video. Click the transcript tab on the side of the video window, then copy and paste into a document for student reference.

Lesson

Tell the students –

“For today’s lesson, we will be watching a series of videos highlighting the various technologies that were developed during the course of World War II with a focus on specific missions and battles that took place in the Pacific Theatre of the war.”

Show the students –

A map of the Pacific Ocean that includes Japan, Hawaii and the United States so that the students get a visual understanding of how large of an area will be covered.

Tell the students –

“While watching each of the videos, you will complete the specific chart with information you learn from the story. We will not be having a class discussion after watching the videos, but I will give you several minutes to summarize the overall concept of the technology featured and how it helped the Allies win the war.”

Tell the students –

“The Pacific Theater of the war for the United States began when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. However, remember the Japanese military invaded Manchuria in 1931 in hopes to gain natural resources and more land for their growing population on the Japanese islands.”

Show the first video – [Chronicles of Courage: Stories of Wartime and Innovation “Flying Tigers”](#)

Flying Tigers	
December 20, 1941	
China	
Which country is an ally of the United States?	
What makes the Japanese Oscar fighter plane so maneuverable?	

What is the significance of the butterfly flap?	
Why is turning ability so important in a fighter plane?	
Given Japan's advanced technology, summarize the tactics the United States had to develop in order to defeat them.	

Tell the students --

“In addition to Hawaii, the Japanese military attacked the Philippines, Wake Island and Guam. Who remembers in which war the United States gained these islands?” (Spanish-American War, 1898).

“So, after these attacks what should the United States do? Let's find out with the next video.”

Show the second video – [Chronicles of Courage: Stories of Wartime and Innovation “The Doolittle Raid”](#)

<p>The Doolittle Raid</p> <p>Spring 1942</p> <p>Japan/China</p>	
Identify the problem – after the Japanese attack, how could the United States retaliate?	
How did technology play a part?	
What was the distance the planes needed to take off from the carrier?	
What adjustments were made to accomplish taking off in such short distances?	
What was the goal of the Doolittle Raid?	
Do you consider this raid to be successful? Why or why not?	
Summarize the overall concept of the technology featured and how it contributed to the Allies ultimately winning the war.	

Tell the students --

“After the morale boosting Doolittle Raid, a strategy was developed to target specific islands in which the Allies could overtake and methodically close in on Japan.”

Show the third video – [Chronicles of Courage: Stories of Wartime and Innovation “F6F Hellcat”](#)

F6F Hellcat 1943 Pacific Ocean	
What is the Fast Carrier Task Force?	
In order to continue in their strategic approach toward Japan, what was needed in addition to the ships?	
What made the Hellcat’s cockpit different?	
Why are the sto-wings important?	
Summarize the overall concept of the technology featured and how it contributed to the Allies ultimately winning the war.	

Teacher to say -

“It is now October 1944 and returning to Philippines was absolutely critical. Over the past two years the Allied forces that remained on the islands were captured and put in POW camps where they sustained brutal and quite often mortal wounds while being detained by the Japanese military.”

Show the third video – [Chronicles of Courage: Stories of Wartime and Innovation “Torpedo Bomber”](#)

Torpedo Bomber Fall 1944 Philippine Islands	
What damage can a torpedo cause?	
What is the difference between previous torpedoes and the Mark 13 Aerial torpedo?	
How did this torpedo technology benefit the Americans in this particular battle?	

Summarize the overall concept of the technology featured and how it contributed to the Allies ultimately winning the war.

Tell the students –

“Before we watch the next video, I want to show you a photographic image.”

Project the image –

[The Flag Raising on Iwo Jima](#), 02/23/1945

Tell the students –

“Who has seen this image?” *Have students raise hands.*

“Who knows the background of this image?” *Call on students as needed.*

“Let’s hear more about the importance of Iwo Jima.”

Show the fifth video – [Chronicles of Courage: Stories of Wartime and Innovation “Flying the Beam”](#)

Flying the Beam	
February 19, 1945	
Iwo Jima	
Where is the island of Iwo Jima located?	
Why is the island important? How big is it?	
How far is Iwo Jima from Japan?	
What is the importance of the B-29 bomber?	
What code do the pilots use to help them navigate over the ocean?	
How did the audio signals help the pilots?	
Summarize the overall concept of the technology featured and how it contributed to the Allies ultimately winning the war.	

Teacher to say –

“I have shown a map because it is important to understand the geographical locations along with the technology that we just heard about in the five videos. You will now create a Google Earth Tour highlighting each location discussed in today’s lesson while describing how the specific technology influenced the event taking place in the war. Before opening Google Earth, summarize the material from the individual charts you used above, into this chart below.”

World War II – The Pacific Theatre				
Event	When	Where	Technology	Describe how the technology influenced the event.
The United States aids China to counter continued Japanese invasion.	December 20, 1941	China		
The Doolittle Raid	Spring 1942	Japan/China		
The United States Fast Carrier Task Force uses an Island Hopping strategy, starting with the least protected islands and gradually moving toward Japan.	1943	Pacific Island		
The Allies battle Japan in the Philippine Sea	Fall 1944	Philippine Islands		
Battle of Iwo Jima	February 19, 1945	Iwo Jima		

Teacher to say –

“Now, you will design and narrate your own Google Earth Tour.”

Individual Assignment

1. Open Google Earth
2. Click Add > Tour
3. To start recording, go to the lower left corner in the media player and click Record/Stop.

4. To record the audio, click the microphone.
5. Navigate to each place you want to visit -
6. At each location, discuss where you are and explain how the technological advancement helped influence the outcome of the war.
7. When you are finished, click Record/Stop.
8. Your tour will start playing once you click Stop.
9. To save your tour, click Save, then name it with Your Last Name then first initial and the number that corresponds to your class period.
10. Send the link to the teacher.

Rubric

Google Earth Tour Rubric				
Criteria	4	3	2	1
Understanding of the topic	Information is accurate Clear understanding of the topic	Information is mostly accurate Good understanding of the topic	Information is somewhat accurate Fair understanding of the topic	Information is unclear Poor understanding of the topic
Tour Stops	Follows the correct order of the locations	Includes all of the locations, but does not follow the correct order.	Does not have all of the locations or does not go in the proper order	Does not have the proper location
Narration	Very Smooth	Smooth	Somewhat Smooth	Very confused; unsure

Standards

11.8. WORLD WAR II (1935 – 1945): The participation of the United States in World War II was a transformative event for the nation and its role in the world. (Standards: 1, 2; Themes: TCC, GOV, CIV, TECH)

Students will examine how technological advancements altered the nature of war and the extent of its devastation, including the use of air power over civilian targets and President

Truman's decision to use the atomic bomb against the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Build Social Studies Literacy through Reading and Writing Common Core State Standard for ELA & Literacy in Social Studies Grades 9-10

Edies » Grade 9-10

<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/9-10/>

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3

Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.5

Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6

Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.7

Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.8

Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claims.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9

Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

Build Social Studies Literacy through Reading and Writing Common Core State Standard for ELA & Literacy in Social Studies Grades 11-12

<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/11-12/>

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3

Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.5

Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.6

Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8

Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.10

By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

NCSS C3 Framework

Dimension 1: Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries

Dimension 2: Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Tools

Dimension 3: Argument Writing

Dimension 4: Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action