**Setting the Scene** When Adolf Hitler learned of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, he was delighted. “Now it is impossible for us to lose the war,” he predicted. “We now have an ally who has never been vanquished in 3,000 years.” Although Germany’s alliance with Japan did not require it, Hitler promptly declared war on the United States.

At first, Hitler’s prediction looked as if it might come true. In 1942, German armies occupied most of Europe and much of North Africa. Japan was sweeping across Asia and the Pacific. By 1944, however, the tide of battle had turned.

** Bleak Days for the Allies**

In early 1942, the situation looked bleak for the Allies. The German war machine seemed unbeatable. German submarines were sinking ships faster than the Allies could replace them. Most of Europe was in Axis hands.

**Soviets Under Siege** In the Soviet Union, German armies were closing in on Moscow, Leningrad, and Stalingrad. The Soviets resisted heroically. They burned crops and destroyed farm equipment so that the Germans could not use them.

Still, the German attack caused terrible hardships. During the 900-day siege of Leningrad, more than one million Russian men, women, and children died, mostly of starvation.

**Japanese Advances** Meanwhile, Japanese forces were on the move in the Pacific. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, they seized Guam, Wake Island, Hong Kong, and Singapore. (See the map on page 797.)

General Douglas MacArthur commanded United States forces in the Pacific. With few troops, MacArthur had to defend a huge area. He directed American and Filipino troops in the defense of the
Philippines and the island of Bataan. They fought bravely against enormous odds. A reporter described the final defeat at Bataan:

"Besieged on land and blockaded by sea, cut off from all sources of help in the Philippines and in America, these intrepid fighters have done all that human endurance could bear... Bataan has fallen, but the spirit that made it stand—a beacon to all liberty-loving peoples of the world—cannot fall!"

—Norman Reyes, "Voice of Freedom" broadcast, 1942

In the end, MacArthur was forced to withdraw. "I shall return," he vowed.

The Japanese pressed on. They captured Malaya, Burma, and the Dutch East Indies. They threatened India to the west and Australia and New Zealand to the south.

The Tide Turns

To succeed against the Axis powers, the Allies had to agree on a strategy. Even before Pearl Harbor, American and British leaders had decided that the Allies must defeat Germany and Italy first. Then, they would send their combined forces to fight Japan.

Japanese Defeats Adopting a "beat Hitler first" strategy did not mean abandoning the war in the Pacific. With the aircraft carriers that had survived the attack on Pearl Harbor, a naval task force met a Japanese fleet in the Coral Sea near Java in May 1942. After a three-day battle, the Japanese fleet turned back. It was the first

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World War II in Europe and Africa

Key
- Main Axis powers, 1942
- Greatest extent of Axis control, 1942
- Neutral nations, 1942
- Allied territory, 1942
- Allied advances
- Major battles

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GEOGRAPHY Skills

Early in the war, the Axis powers gained control of much of Western Europe and North Africa. The tide later began to turn in favor of the Allies.

1. Location On the map, locate (a) El Alamein, (b) Stalingrad, (c) Sicily, (d) Normandy, (e) Berlin.

2. Movement In what year did Allied troops first enter Italy? Germany?

3. Critical Thinking Drawing Conclusions Why do you think the Allies did not attack France by way of the Spanish-French border?
An American Profile

George S. Patton 1885-1945

A brilliant general, George Patton was known as "Old Blood and Guts" for his toughness and drive. "We'll win this war," he predicted, "by showing the Germans we've got more guts than they have." He led American tanks to victory after victory in North Africa.

Patton pushed his troops hard, but he was always ready to get down in the mud and blood with them. Once, marching alongside his men, he saw a soldier with a horribly wounded leg. Patton gave the soldier a dose of painkiller and stayed with the dying man until an ambulance arrived.

*Why do you think Patton was willing to walk alongside his troops?*

narnal battle in history in which the ships never engaged one other directly. All the damage was done by airplanes from the carriers.

One month later, the United States Navy won a stunning victory at the Battle of Midway. American planes sank four Japanese aircraft carriers. The battle severely hampered the Japanese offensive. It also kept Japan from attacking Hawaii again.

**Victories in North Africa** Allied forces began to push back the Germans in North Africa. In October 1942, the British won an important victory at El Alamein in Egypt. German forces under General Erwin Rommel were driven west into Tunisia.

Meanwhile, American troops under the command of Generals Dwight D. Eisenhower, Omar Bradley, and George S. Patton landed in Morocco and Algeria. They then pushed east. Allied armies trapped Rommel's forces in Tunisia. In May 1943, his army had to surrender.

**Success in Europe** From bases in North Africa, the Allies organized the invasion of Italy. They used paratroopers and soldiers brought by sea to capture Sicily. In early September 1943, the Allies crossed from Sicily to the mainland of Italy.

By then, Mussolini had been overthrown. The Germans, however, still occupied much of Italy. In a series of bloody battles, the Allies slowly fought their way up the peninsula. On June 4, 1944, Allied troops marched into Rome. It was the first European capital to be freed from Nazi control.

The Soviet army repelled the Germans from Leningrad in 1943. At Stalingrad, after months of fierce house-to-house fighting, Soviet soldiers forced the German army to surrender. Slowly, the Soviet army pushed the Germans westward through Eastern Europe.

**Opening a Second Front**

Fighting in Russia and Eastern Europe was fierce. The Soviet Union would eventually lose some 9 million soldiers, more than any other country.

For years, Stalin had urged Britain and the United States to send armies across the English Channel into France. Such an attack would create a second front in Western Europe and ease pressure in the East. However, not until 1944 were Churchill and Roosevelt prepared to attempt an invasion of Western Europe.

Years of planning went into Operation Overlord, the code name for the invasion of Europe. General Eisenhower was appointed commander of Allied forces in Europe. He faced an enormous task. He had to organize a huge army, ferry it across the English Channel, and provide it with ammunition, food, and other supplies. By June 1944, almost 3 million troops were ready for the invasion.

The Germans knew that an attack was coming, but not when or where. To guard against the Allied invasion, they had mined beaches and strung barbed wire. Machine guns and concrete antitank walls stood ready to stop an advance.

**D-Day Invasion** On June 6, 1944—D-Day, as it was known—a fleet of 4,000 Allied ships carried the invasion force to France. Allied
troops scrambled ashore at Normandy. One American soldier who landed in the first wave recalled:

"It all seemed unreal, a sort of dreaming while awake, men were screaming and dying all around me. . . . I honestly could have walked the full length of the beach without touching the ground, they were that thickly strewn about."

—Melvin B. Farrell, War Memories

Despite intense German gunfire and heavy losses, Allied forces pushed on. Every day, more soldiers landed to reinforce the advance. On August 25, 1944, the Allies entered Paris. After four years under Nazi rule, the Parisians greeted their liberators with joy. Within a month, all of France was free.

**Victory in Europe**

By September, the Allies were moving east toward Germany. However, a shortage of truck fuel slowed the advance.

**Advancing Toward Germany** On December 16, 1944, German forces began a fierce counterattack. They pushed the Allies back, creating a bulge in the front lines. During the Battle of the Bulge, as it was later called, Audie Murphy emerged as the most honored American hero of the war. At one point, Murphy climbed aboard a burning tank. Alone and wounded, he used the tank's machine gun to hold off enemy troops on three sides.

**Turning Points in World War II**

1. **Battle of Midway, 1942**
   - United States Navy sinks four Japanese aircraft carriers and destroys hundreds of airplanes. Major Japanese offensive is turned back.

2. **Battle of Stalingrad, 1942-1943**
   - Germans try to take Stalingrad. Russian troops and freezing weather force their surrender.

3. **Battle of El Alamein, 1942**
   - British drive back German advances. This leads to German surrender of African lands.

4. **Invasion of Italy, 1943**
   - British and American forces land in Sicily and go on into Italy. Hitler is forced to send troops to help Italy fight the Allies.

5. **Invasion of Normandy (D-Day), 1944**
   - Allied troops land on beaches of Normandy. They go on to free France from German control.

**GRAPHIC ORGANIZER**

**Skills**

Several key victories helped the Allies turn the tide against the Axis powers.

1. **Comprehension** Which of the military actions described above was a turning point in the Pacific war?

2. **Critical Thinking** Describe how one of the victories was a necessary first step to another.
The Battle of the Bulge slowed the Allies but did not stop them. While Allied armies advanced on the ground, Allied planes bombed Germany. At night, British airmen dropped tons of bombs on German cities. By day, the Americans bombed factories and oil refineries. The bombing caused severe fuel shortages in Germany and reduced the nation's ability to produce war goods.

**A New President** By mid-1944, the Allied advance shared headlines in American newspapers with the upcoming election. Breaking all tradition, President Roosevelt ran for a fourth term. His Republican opponent was Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York.

Roosevelt was tired and ill. "All that is within me cries to go back to my home on the Hudson," he wrote. Still, he and his running mate, Senator Harry S Truman of Missouri, campaigned strongly. Roosevelt won more than 54 percent of the vote.

In early April 1945, FDR was on vacation in Georgia. While he was sitting to have his portrait painted, the President complained of a headache. Within hours, he was dead.

All over the world, people mourned Roosevelt. His death especially shocked Americans. After 12 years, many could hardly remember any other President. As for Truman, he was faced with taking over a country in the midst of war. "I felt like the moon, the stars, and all the planets had fallen on me," he later recalled.

**Germany Is Defeated** By April 1945, Germany was collapsing. American troops were closing in on Berlin from the west. Soviet troops were advancing from the east. On April 25, American and Soviet troops met at Torgau, 60 miles south of Berlin.

As Allied air raids pounded Berlin, Hitler hid in his underground bunker. Unwilling to accept defeat, he committed suicide. One week later, on May 7, 1945, Germany surrendered to the Allies. On May 8, the Allies celebrated the long-awaited V-E Day—Victory in Europe.
Today, there are dozens of Internet sites devoted to World War II, as well as to other historical topics. As a student of history, it is important to evaluate the different Web sites to determine how valid the information is. The page below is from a Web site devoted to the D-Day invasion of France.

**Learn the Skill** To learn how to evaluate Internet sources, use the following steps:

1. **Determine the Web site's purpose.** Does the Web site provide information? Is it trying to sell something or to promote a particular point of view?
2. **Examine the information.** Does the site include visuals? Does it include firsthand accounts and other primary source materials?
3. **Compare the information to what you already know.** Does the information agree with what you have read in a textbook or other reliable print source? What other information is provided?
4. **Evaluate the source.** Is the source an established organization? Can you tell who provided the information?

**Practice the Skill** Use the information given above to answer the following questions:

1. What seems to be the purpose of this Web site?
2. (a) What kinds of information can you access from this page? (b) What other features and links does it include?
3. What additional information does this Web site provide to the facts given in your textbook?
4. (a) Who is the provider for this site? (b) If you were writing a paper about D-Day, do you think you could use the information provided on this Web site? Why or why not?

**Apply the Skill** See the Chapter Review and Assessment.