Essay and Discussion Questions

## Contemporary History World at War High School Questions

Help students understand how events between 1900 and 1945 continue to shape today's world through these essay and discussion questions.

## Introduction

- 1. How and why did World War I shape women's roles in society?
- 2. During the United States' history, what factors have pushed the country toward global engagement? What factors have pushed it toward isolationism?
- 3. In what ways were the causes of World War I and World War II similar? How did they differ?
- 4. How did nationalism help cause World War I?
- 5. Why did appeasement in the late 1930s backfire?
- 6. What lessons does the failure of the Treaty of Versailles have for future diplomatic agreements?

## Fascism and Communism

- 1. How was a leader as radical as Adolf Hitler able to rise to power in Germany?
- 2. How did fascist regimes use existing institutions to gain power?
- 3. In what ways did the Soviet Union not live up to Karl Marx's vision of communism?
- 4. Is nationalism a positive or negative force in the world?
- 5. What is appealing about Marx's vision of communism?
- 6. What does the history of the Soviet Union suggest about the limitations of communism in practice?

## United States As a Global Power

- 1. Following World War II, what international organization did the United States help create to encourage cooperation and security?
- 2. Based on what you know of its rise, when would you argue the United States become a global power?
- 3. During the United States' history, what factors have pushed the country toward global engagement? What factors have pushed it toward isolationism?
- 4. In what two key ways did the United States seek to limit the influence of the Soviet Union in post-war Europe?