

Summary: World War II

Another World War

In the 1930s, a new war started in Europe. Adolf Hitler was a German dictator who wanted his country to be powerful. Italy and Japan wanted to become world powers too. These countries became allies. They fought against France, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union.

In 1941, Japanese planes bombed American planes and ships at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The United States declared war on Japan the next day. Germany and Italy then declared war on the United States.

The U.S. government built many military bases in Florida. Pilots, soldiers, and sailors were trained at training centers in Florida. Florida's sunny skies were used to train pilots. The oceans were a good place to train sailors. Soldiers used the shorelines to practice beach landings.

Life During the War

Many Floridians served in the armed forces. Floridians at home took part in the war too. They helped the war effort by rationing. Extra supplies were then sent to soldiers overseas.

Floridians also grew their own food in "victory gardens." Some helped watch the coast for danger. Many Floridians bought war bonds. Others collected scrap materials to be recycled and used by our armed forces.

Winning the War

Thousands of workers were needed to support the war. People came to Florida and built housing and roads for the military. Others provided goods and services to the bases. Many worked in shipyards. Farming also boomed.

As many men went off to fight, women took more jobs in shipyards, factories, and businesses. The war gave African Americans, Latinos, and American Indians jobs with better pay.

Florida's economy grew quickly as a result of World War II. Unemployment was no longer a problem. Many people had jobs. This caused cities and towns to grow.

The war ended in 1945 when Germany and Japan surrendered. Millions of men and women had trained at Florida's military bases. Sadly, more than 4,000 Floridians gave their lives during the war.

Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

dictator *noun*, a leader of a country who has complete control of its government

war bond *noun*, loans to the U.S. government to pay the high costs of war

rationing *verb*, the government limits what people can buy

After You Read

REVIEW Why were thousands of soldiers stationed in Florida during World War II? Circle three sentences that tell why Florida was a good place to train pilots, sailors, and soldiers.

REVIEW Name two ways Floridians at home helped soldiers overseas. Highlight two sentences that tell what Floridians did.

REVIEW Why did Florida experience a boom during the war years? Underline the sentence that tells what caused Florida's cities and towns to grow.