

## KIDS ON THE WWII HOME FRONT

**Note to teachers:** This supplement includes a discussion guide, lessons and Michigan Content Standards to use with the Michigan Time Traveler page. You may reproduce the pages in this supplement to use with students. Follow the Michigan Time Traveler link on the Michigan Historical Center's Teacher's Stuff page to this Teacher's Guide for additional on-line activities and resources: <http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/museum/techstuff/>.

### DISCUSSION GUIDE

(SOC 1.3. Analyze and Interpret the Past; SOC.1.1. Time and Chronology; ELA 3. Meaning and Communication in Context)

- **Kids Pitch In:** How did kids help the war effort? Find out more about milkweed pods in a science or plant book or Web site. How hard would it have been to collect 50 pounds of milkweed pods? Rationing and recycling saved materials for use in manufacturing military goods. What materials used in shoes, cars and bicycles would have been needed for the war? What items do we recycle today? Why?
- **V-Mail:** What was V-Mail? Why did the government encourage the use of V-Mail?
- **Kids Help Finance the War:** How did kids help the government with its war bond drives? Why did it make sense for kids to buy the lower cost stamps?
- **The Red Cross.** Why would students in a school want to have a special program when collecting money for the Red Cross?
- **A Home Front Time Line:** For how long was the United States involved in World War II? What were the first items to be rationed? What was added later? How do you think most people answered the questions in the 1945 Gallup poll?

### ACTIVITY ONE: What Happened on the WWII Home Front? Make a Time Line

(SOC.1.1. Time and Chronology; SOC 1.3. Analyze and Interpret the Past)

Put each event on the Michigan Time Traveler page time line on a poster or card and hang the posters/cards around the classroom. Extend the time line by making a poster or card for each item below. Divide students into groups of 2-3. Assign one event from the newspaper time line or list below to each group. Ask each group to research its event, describe it and explain how it affected people during World War II. Reports may be oral or written.

Sept. 14, 1940	In response to Hitler's victories in Europe, the U.S. approves its first peacetime military draft.
Jan. 6, 1941	President Roosevelt talks about the essential "Four Freedoms" (freedom of speech and religion, freedom from want and fear) in a speech to Congress.
1941	Penicillin is first mass produced.
1942	<i>White Christmas</i> and <i>Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition</i> are popular songs.
April 1942	The federal government begins forcibly relocating Japanese-Americans from the West Coast to relocation centers. Their detention will last 3 years.
March 31, 1943	The musical <i>Oklahoma</i> opens on Broadway.
June 20, 1943	A race riot began in Detroit: 34 dead, 676 injured, 1,838 arrested.
June 22, 1944	The Servicemen's Readjustment Act, known as the GI Bill of Rights, is passed.
July 16, 1945	The first atomic bomb is exploded at Alamogordo, New Mexico.

## ACTIVITY TWO: What Is Patriotism?

(SOC.III.2. *Ideals of American Democracy*; ELA 3. *Meaning and Communication in Context*)

Discuss the meaning of patriotism with your students. List their responses on the board in three categories. First, talk about it as a **feeling**. The dictionary definition is “love for or devotion to one’s country.” How do students feel about their country, its way of life and its freedoms? Second, talk about it as **knowing and understanding**. What should we know to be patriotic? (Laws, constitution, Bill of Rights, Declaration of Independence, etc.) Third, talk about what **actions we do** to show patriotism. Discuss expressions of patriotism such as flying the flag, wearing red, white and blue and singing or listening to patriotic songs. Lead the discussion toward action-oriented expressions of patriotism such as doing helpful projects and good deeds, obeying laws, and voting or enlisting in the military. Talk about why actions that are illegal or unkind show lack of patriotism. Share these headlines from Local/State sections of the *Lansing State Journal* with your students. Ask: Does the story tell about people who showed patriotism? Why or why not? Assign: Find and read an article in the newspaper, then present an oral or written report about the article and how people’s actions did or did not demonstrate patriotism.

“Scouts show their reverence for flag” 10-28-01, 1B	“Teen charged in death of former murder suspect” 10-30-01, 3B
“4-H’ers to sew pajamas for children in shelter” 10-28-01, 3B	“Students collect funds for Red Cross” 10-31-01, 4B
“OxyContin abuse grows in Michigan” 10-29-01, 1B	“Police seek robber of sandwich store” 11-01-01, 3B
“Retired officer killed in purse robbery” 10-30-01, 2B	“Two shop workers robbed at gunpoint” 11-01-01, 3B
“Holt students donate \$1,100 to Red Cross” 10-30-01, 3B	“4-H Clubs assemble N.Y. care packages” 11-01-01 4B

## ACTIVITY THREE: Write a V-Mail Letter

(SOC 1.3. *Analyze and Interpret the Past*; ELA 2. *Meaning and Communication: Writing*)

Enlarge the V-Mail handout (pages 3 and 4). V-mail stationery was 8.5"x11" plus the flap. Copy front-to-back (or have students paste or tape the pages together to make a single sheet). Distribute to students. Ask students to be time travelers to 1943 and imagine what their lives would have been like. Talk about rationing, collecting scrap, seeing patriotic posters, hearing and reading news of battles and having a friend or family member away from home in the armed forces. Ask students to imagine the friend or family member. What kind of work is the person doing? (Soldier, pilot, nurse, mechanic, etc.) In what country is the person stationed? Assign: Write a V-Mail letter to tell the friend or relative what life is like on the home front and to encourage the friend or family member in his or her war work.

## ACTIVITY FOUR: Design and Make Patriotic Posters

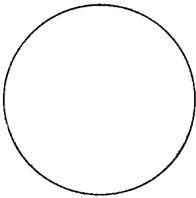
(SOC 1.3. *Analyze and Interpret the Past*; Arts 2. *Visual Arts: Creating*)

On January 6, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Address to Congress (also known as the Four Freedoms Speech) outlined four essential freedoms: of speech and religion and from want and fear. Inspired by the speech, artist Norman Rockwell created a poster to illustrate each freedom. Other WWII posters illustrated patriotic slogans like those listed below. Learn more about WWII posters at these Web sites: National Archives and Records Administration “Powers of Persuasion: Poster Art from World War II,” <http://www.nara.gov/exhall/powers/powers.html>, and World War II Poster Collection, Northwestern University Library, <http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/collections/wwii-posters/>. Ask students to create a poster with a slogan for a current national issue such as the War Against Terrorism, getting out the vote, recycling or the environment, or for one of the Core Democratic Values.

Loose lips sink ships.	What did you do today . . . for freedom?
Get in the scrap! [“Get in” means bring it in.]	Where our men are fighting, our food is fighting.
Do with less—so they’ll have enough!	United we are strong: united we will win.
Walk, don’t ride!	Buy a share in America: United States defense bonds.
Back the attack with War Bonds!	Use it up—wear it out—make it do!

Print the complete address in plain block letters in the panel below, and your return address in the space provided. Use typewriter, dark ink, or pencil. Write plainly. Very small writing is not suitable.

No. \_\_\_\_\_



(CENSOR'S STAMP)

To

Large rectangular area for the recipient's address.

From

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Sender's name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Sender's address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

FOLD SIDES OVER AND THEN FOLD BOTTOM UP AND SEAL  
NO OTHER ENVELOPE SHOULD BE USED

**V...-MAIL**

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT PERMIT NO. 1

This V-Mail template has been scanned from an unused original in the collections of the Michigan Historical Museum.  
Reproducible master courtesy Lansing Newspapers in Education, Inc.  
Provided by the *Lansing State Journal* and the Michigan Historical Center Foundation

**DO NOT WRITE HERE**

**DO NOT WRITE HERE**

**DO NOT WRITE HERE**

**V... MAIL**

See Instruction No. 5

**DO NOT WRITE HERE**

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**DO NOT WRITE HERE**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

- (1) Write the entire message plainly on the other side within marginal lines.
- (2) PRINT the name and address in the two panels provided. Addresses to members of the Armed Forces should include rank or rating of the addressee, unit to which attached, and APO or Naval address.
- (3) Fold, seal, and deposit in any post office letter drop or street letter box.
- (4) Enclosures must not be placed in this envelope and a separate V-Mail letter must be sent if you desire to write more than one sheet.
- (5) V-Mail letters may be sent free of postage by members of the Armed Forces. When sent by others postage must be prepaid at domestic rates (3c ordinary mail, 6c if air mail is desired).

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT PERMIT NO. 1

**DO NOT WRITE HERE**

**DO NOT WRITE HERE**

V-Mail Service provides the most expeditious dispatch and reduces the weight of mail to and from personnel of our Armed Forces outside the continental United States. When addressed to points where micro-film equipment is operated, a miniature photographic negative of the message will be made and sent by the most expeditious transportation available for reproduction and delivery. The original message will be destroyed after the reproduction has been delivered. Messages addressed to or from points where micro-film equipment is not operated will be transmitted in their original form by the most expeditious means available.

**DO NOT WRITE HERE**

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# Kids on the WWII Home Front

## Selected Resources

### BOOKS

- Allen, Thomas B. *Remember Pearl Harbor: American and Japanese Survivors Tell Their Stories*. Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, 2001. (Grades 5-9)
- Ambrose, Stephen E. *The Good Fight: How World War II Was Won*. NY: Atheneum, 2001. (Ages 9-12)
- King, David C. *World War II Days: Discover the Past with Exciting Projects, Games, Activities, and Recipes*. NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2000.
- “Molly,” World War II doll, books and activities from The American Girls Collection, The Pleasant Company.
- Murray, Stuart and James McCabe. *Norman Rockwell's Four Freedoms*. NY: Gramercy Books, 1998.

### WEB LINKS

These links to information related to the “Kids on the World War II Home Front” topic provide further resources for your study. We hope you find them useful and informative. We have examined them all for suitability, but we cannot be responsible for the availability or content of sites outside the Michigan Historical Center.

#### Michigan Historical Center Web Pages

##### *Michigan History Magazine* Articles—

**An Opportunity of a Lifetime**, a WASP’s (Women’s Air Force Service Pilot) story (PDF format)  
<http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/mag/portfoli/pdf/inside06.pdf>

**Eavesdropping on the Future**, a radio intercept operator’s story (PDF format)  
<http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/mag/portfoli/pdf/inside08.pdf>

**Pearl Harbor Remembered**, eyewitness accounts  
[http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/mag/extra/pearl\\_harbor/](http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/mag/extra/pearl_harbor/)

**The Road to Burma**, the India Burma campaign  
<http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/mag/extra/india/burma.html>

**Tanks**, the history of American tanks from WWI to the present  
<http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/mag/extra/tanks/tanksmain.html>

**The 1940s, On the Air! Michigan Radio and Television Broadcasting** exhibit feature  
<http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/museum/explore/museums/hismus/special/ontheair/tour40s.html>

**The 1942 Jeep**, viewed in the Michigan Historical Museum’s Arsenal of Democracy gallery  
<http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/autoshow/vehicles/jeep.html>

**Defending Our Country and Our Labor**, WWII artifacts from the *Thanks for the Memories* exhibit  
<http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/museum/explore/museums/hismus/special/memory/belong/defense.html>

**Michigan’s Merci Boxcar**, picture and story of France’s gift to Michigan after WWII  
<http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/museum/explore/museums/hismus/special/memory/spectime/boxcar.html>

**Michigan Through the Years: A Brief History** (Click on October 1, 1942, Arsenal of Democracy.)  
<http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/michinfo/briefhis/>

**Military-related Special License Plates, Michigan**  
[http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/autoshow/l\\_plates/military.html](http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/autoshow/l_plates/military.html)

**USS *Silversides***, WWII submarine—now a National Historic Landmark  
<http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/preserve/phissite/silversi.html>

## **BBC Online**

### **Children of World War 2**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2children/index.shtml>

### **Scotland During the Second World War**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/aroundscotland/ww2/index.shtml>

## **Department of Veterans Affairs**

### **Veterans Day**

<http://www.va.gov/vetsday/>

### **Lessons of Liberty Initiative**

<http://www.va.gov/Veteranedu/>

## **Franklin D. Roosevelt Library and Digital Archives**

<http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/>

## **The History Channel**

### **Dear Home: Letters from World War II.**

<http://www.historychannel.com/exhibits/dearhome>

### **National World War Two Memorial**

<http://www.historychannel.com/classroom/worldwarII/index.html>

## **National Archives and Records Administration**

### **Powers of Persuasion: Poster Art from World War II**

<http://www.nara.gov/exhall/powers/powers.html>

### **Norman Rockwell's Four Freedoms poster**

<http://www.nara.gov/exhall/powers/freedoms.html>

### **"A Date Which Will Live in Infamy": The First Typed Draft of Franklin D. Roosevelt's War Address (classroom lesson)**

<http://www.nara.gov/education/teaching/fdr/infamy.html>

### **Franklin D. Roosevelt's War Address, December 8, 1941**

<http://www.nara.gov/exhall/originals/fdr.html>

## **ProTeacher Links to World War II lessons online**

<http://www.proteacher.com/090075.shtml>

## **Remember Pearl Harbor, National Geographic**

<http://plasma.nationalgeographic.com/pearlharbor/>

## **USS *Arizona* Memorial, National Park Service**

<http://www.nps.gov/usar/>

## **World War II Advertising Campaigns, Ad\*Access, Duke University**

<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/adaccess/wwad-history.html>

## **World War II Poster Collection, Northwestern University Library**

<http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/collections/wwii-posters/>

## **World War II Timeline, University of San Diego**

<http://history.acusd.edu/gen/WW2Timeline/start.html>

## **World War II Unit, Alabama Department of Archives & History**

<http://www.archives.state.al.us/teacher/ww2/>