



World War II: Causes and Consequences

By: Amanda Martin
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Social Studies
Grades 9–12



Introduction

What caused World War II? Why did it happen? Both of those questions and more will be answered during this lesson. Students will take an in-depth look at the causes and consequences of World War II.

Learning Objectives

Students will understand the causes and global consequences of World War II. ([NSS-WH.5-12.8](#))

Materials Needed

- Notebooks/journals/notebook paper
- Laptops/computers
- Textbooks

Procedure

1. Ask students to pull out their journals/notebooks. On their paper, students should construct a K-W-L chart. Ask students to jot down any information that they think they know about World War II in the “K” section of the chart. Allow students roughly 3 minutes to think and work independently.
2. Ask a few students to share information from their “K” column. At this point in the lesson, do not go into great detail about the aspects of World War II. Instead, simply allow students a chance to share what they think they know about the war.
3. Now, it is time to learn more about the causes and the atmosphere surrounding World War II. [Here is a detailed video](#) from Khan Academy outlining the beginnings of the war.
4. Encourage students to take notes during the short video. At the video’s conclusion, feel free to add additional information about World War II that you deem valuable.
5. Ask students to think about what they have just watched. In the “W” column of their charts, ask students to write this question: What were the causes of World War II? Students may use laptops/computers, notes from the video, and textbooks to research the answer. Give students 10 minutes to find and record the information in their K-W-L charts. When time is up, discuss the causes of WWII together. Encourage students to add information that they did not come up with to their own charts as the class discusses.

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6. During this portion of the lesson, students will participate in a teacher-led discussion. Inform students of the global consequences that occurred due to WWII. Discuss the following: rise in communist influence in Asia, European economy collapse, recovery from atomic bombs in Japan, etc.
7. To close the lesson, students will complete the “L” section of their K-W-L charts. For “L,” students will explain what they have learned. Using complete sentences, students should describe what they have learned in regards to the causes and consequences of World War II. Students should prepare to turn in their K-W-L charts before exiting the classroom.

Evaluation

Students will be asked to write what they have learned in relation to the causes and consequences of the war. To evaluate student learning, student responses should first accurately describe the causes of WWII. If the student does not list or explain any of the causes, full credit should not be given. Students should additionally describe the consequences of WWII. Students should not be expected to write down all causes and consequences; however, their responses should show enough to determine that the student has a good understanding of both.