Chapter 19

Section 4   America Enters the War

Click on a hyperlink to view the corresponding slides.
Chapter Objectives

Section 4: America Enters the War

• Explain how Roosevelt helped Britain while maintaining official neutrality.

• Trace the events that led to increasing tensions, and ultimately war, between the United States and Japan.
Guide to Reading

Main Idea

After World War II began, the United States attempted to continue its prewar policy of neutrality. ↓

Key Terms and Names

• America First Committee ↓
• Lend-Lease Act ↓
• hemispheric defense zone ↓

• Atlantic Charter ↓
• strategic materials
FDR Supports England

- Two days after Britain and France declared war against Germany, President Roosevelt declared the United States neutral.

- The Neutrality Act of 1939 allowed warring countries to buy weapons from the United States as long as they paid cash and carried the arms away on their own ships.
FDR Supports England (cont.)

• President Roosevelt used a loophole in the Neutrality Act of 1939 and sent 50 old American destroyers to Britain in exchange for the right to build American bases on British-controlled Newfoundland, Bermuda, and Caribbean islands.
FDR Supports England (cont.)

Discussion Question

How did President Roosevelt support Britain in the war effort?

President Roosevelt used a loophole in the Neutrality Act of 1939 and sent 50 old American destroyers to Britain in exchange for the right to build American bases on British-controlled Newfoundland, Bermuda, and Caribbean islands.
The Isolationist Debate

• After the German invasion of France and the rescue of Allied forces at Dunkirk, American public opinion changed to favor limited aid to the Allies.

• The America First Committee opposed any American intervention or aid to the Allies.
The Isolationist Debate (cont.)

- President Roosevelt ran for an unprecedented third term as president in the election of 1940. ↓
- Both Roosevelt and the Republican candidate, Wendell Willkie, said they would keep the United States neutral but assist the Allied forces. ↓
- Roosevelt won by a large margin.
What caused many Americans to change their opinion about United States neutrality?

After the German invasion of France and the rescue of Allied forces at Dunkirk, American public opinion changed to favor limited aid to the Allies.
Edging Toward War

- President Roosevelt proposed the **Lend-Lease Act**, which stated that the United States could lend or lease arms to any country considered “vital to the defense of the United States.”
- Congress passed the act by a wide margin.

(pages 603–604)
Edging Toward War (cont.)

- In June 1941, in violation of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, Hitler began a massive invasion of the Soviet Union.
Edging Toward War (cont.)

- President Roosevelt developed the **hemispheric defense zone**, which declared the entire western half of the Atlantic as part of the Western Hemisphere and therefore neutral.

- This allowed Roosevelt to order the U.S. Navy to patrol the western Atlantic Ocean and reveal the location of German submarines to the British.
Edging Toward War (cont.)

• In August 1941, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill agreed to the Atlantic Charter.

• This agreement committed the two leaders to a postwar world of democracy, nonaggression, free trade, economic advancement, and freedom of the seas.
Edging Toward War (cont.)

- After a German U-boat fired on the American destroyer *Greer*, Roosevelt ordered American ships to follow a “shoot-on-sight” policy toward German submarines.

- Germans torpedoed and sank the American destroyer *Reuben James* in the North Atlantic.
Edging Toward War (cont.)

Discussion Question

How did President Roosevelt get around American neutrality in order to aid the British?
President Roosevelt proposed the Lend-Lease Act, which stated that the United States could lend or lease arms to any country considered “vital to the defense of the United States.” President Roosevelt developed the hemispheric defense zone, which declared the entire western half of the Atlantic as part of the Western Hemisphere and therefore neutral. This allowed Roosevelt to order the U.S. Navy to patrol the western Atlantic Ocean and reveal the location of German submarines to the British.
Japan Attacks the United States

- Roosevelt’s primary goal between August 1939 and December 1941 was to help Britain and its allies defeat Germany.

- When Britain began moving its warships from Southeast Asia to the Atlantic, Roosevelt introduced policies to discourage the Japanese from attacking the British Empire.
Japan Attacks the United States (cont.)

• In July 1940, Congress passed the Export Control Act, giving Roosevelt the power to restrict the sale of strategic materials—materials important for fighting a war—to other countries.

• Roosevelt immediately blocked the sale of airplane fuel and scrap iron to Japan.

• The Japanese signed an alliance with Germany and Italy.
Japan Attacks the United States (cont.)

- By July 1941, Japanese aircraft posed a direct threat to the British Empire.
- Roosevelt responded to the threat by freezing all Japanese assets in the United States and reducing the amount of oil shipped to Japan.
- He also sent General MacArthur to the Philippines to build up American defenses there.
Japan Attacks the United States

• The Japanese decided to attack resource-rich British and Dutch colonies in Southeast Asia, seize the Philippines, and attack Pearl Harbor.

• Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, sinking or damaging 21 ships of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, killing 2,403 Americans, and injuring hundreds more.

• The next day, President Roosevelt asked Congress to declare war on Japan.
On December 11, 1941, Japan’s allies—Germany and Italy—declared war on the United States.
Japan Attacks the United States (cont.)

**Discussion Question**

What series of events led to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor?
The United States Congress passed the Export Control Act that restricted the sale of strategic materials to other nations. Roosevelt immediately blocked the sale of airplane fuel and scrap iron to Japan. This angered Japan, which then signed an alliance with Germany and Italy. The Japanese invasion of southern Indochina caused Roosevelt to freeze all Japanese assets in the United States and reduce the amount of oil shipped to Japan. He also sent General MacArthur to the Philippines to build up American defenses there. The Japanese military, lacking oil and other resources, decided to attack the resource-rich British and Dutch colonies in Southeast Asia, seize the Philippines, and attack Pearl Harbor.
Checking for Understanding

Define Match the terms on the right with their definitions on the left.

B 1. materials needed for fighting a war
A 2. national policy during World War II that declared the Western Hemisphere to be neutral and that the United States would patrol this region against German submarines

A. hemispheric defense zone
B. strategic materials
Individual Action  After Roosevelt made the destroyer-for-bases deal with Britain, some Americans called him a dictator. Do you think Roosevelt was right or wrong in his actions? Explain your answer.

Answers will vary.
Interpreting Why was the United States unprepared for Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor?

The United States was still negotiating with Japan and had failed to collect sufficient information. The U.S. military had not shared information among the various branches.
Analyzing Maps  Study the map on pages 604–605 of your textbook. Based on the geography of Oahu, why was the location of Pearl Harbor perfect for a naval base?

It was sheltered and provided easy access to the ocean.
In what three ways did Roosevelt help Britain while maintaining an American policy of neutrality?

Roosevelt made a destroyers-for-bases deal, got Congress to pass the Lend-Lease Act, and developed the hemispheric defense zone strategy.
Directions: Choose the phrase that best completes the following statement.

When Roosevelt signed the Lend-Lease Act in 1941, he said that the United States must become the “arsenal of democracy” in order to

A  end the Depression.
B  help the Axis powers.
C  remain neutral.
D  help Great Britain.

Test-Taking Tip  An arsenal is a stockpile or storehouse of weapons. Eliminate any answer that does not relate to using weapons to protect democracy.
**Geography**

To gain direct access to natural resources, Japanese military leaders aimed to build an empire in the Pacific. The U.S. Pacific Fleet was headquartered at Oahu island in Hawaii—approximately 70 warships, including 8 battleships and 24 auxiliary vessels, were stationed at Pearl Harbor on the island. Thus, Japanese military leaders saw the fleet as an obstacle that had to be destroyed if they were to achieve their goals.
**CHAPTER Maps & Charts**

**Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, December 7, 1941**

1. 6:45 A.M.: The destroyer Ward sinks a Japanese midget submarine near the entrance to Pearl Harbor.

2. 7:02 to 7:39 A.M.: Army radar at Opana tracks a cloud of aircraft approaching from the north. An officer at Fort Shafter concludes it is a flight of 97s due in from California.

3. 7:49 A.M.: The first wave of 183 Japanese planes is ordered to attack. The force includes 40 torpedo bombers and 49 high-altitude bombers—each armed with a single projectile—bound for Battleship Row. Other bombers and Zero fighters attack airfields.

4. 8:55 A.M.: The second wave of 167 planes renews the attack on airfields and ships. Oil tanks and most ship repair facilities are ignored, an omission the Japanese later regret.

**Legend**

- **First wave of Japanese aircraft**
- **Second wave of Japanese aircraft**
- **Time of initial attack (First wave)**
- **8:55 A.M.**
  - **Time of initial attack (Second wave)**
  - **Airfield**
  - **Airfield attacked**
  - **Radar site**
  - **Town**
Identifying Point of View

THE ISOLATIONIST DEBATE

Three major groups summarized the opinions Americans had about the United States’s involvement in World War II:

- **Fight for Freedom Committee**
  urged the immediate declaration of war on Germany

- **Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies**
  pressed for increased American aid to the Allies but opposed using American personnel to fight the war

- **America First Committee**
  firmly opposed any American intervention or aid to the Allies

**Directions:** Answer the following question based on the information at left.

**Which of the following statements is the most accurate?**

- **A** The Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies wanted to send Americans to fight the war.
- **B** The America First Committee was strongly isolationist in that it opposed any involvement in the war.
- **C** The Fight for Freedom Committee wanted to severely limit any American involvement.
- **D** The Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies did not want to send aid to the European Allies.

Click the mouse button or press the Space Bar to display the answer.