

Reactions to World War II

*The Great Depression and
World War II (1929–1945)*



The home front

Rapid change

The Holocaust

Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Society and culture



War, diplomacy and foreign policy

Icons: For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page



By the end of this section, you will learn about how World War II brought about rapid changes in American society and be able to answer these key questions:

- How did the roles of women and minorities expand during the war?
- What was Japanese American internment?
- What was American society like just after the war? What changes were made?



During the war, employees had fairly good conditions. **Unemployment** fell to very low levels and the average weekly pay had increased by 10%.

The onset of the war and the growth of war-centered industries had led to an overall expansion of job availability.

In particular, there were labor shortages in farm and military-orientated industries.



How do you think the government coped with the labor shortages?





The shortage of workers in many industries led to the encouragement of women workers throughout the nation.



Opportunities were created for women in areas previously reserved for men.

Out of the six million women who entered the workforce, a third worked in defense industries.

Initially, owners were reluctant to employ women for fear that they would tire too easily. However, women soon proved that they were more than capable and were hired in large numbers.

What other industries did women work in?



Agricultural shortages



Shortages began to occur in the food supply because many American farmers had gone off to fight in World War II.

Although some women became farm laborers, Roosevelt decided to take action in 1942.

The **Bracero Program** was agreed with Mexico, which created a guest farm worker project.

Over four million Mexicans, most experienced farmers, temporarily entered the U.S. to work on farms.



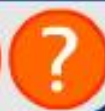
What problems might this influx cause?



The reality of large numbers of minorities entering the workforce caused problems. Do you know how the federal government tried to reduce these tensions?
Read this passage about governmental policies and select the correct word to fill each blank.

Press **start** to begin.

start





Migration was a major socioeconomic trend during the war. At this time, over 15 million Americans moved, with many favoring Northern and Western cities. Many minorities also migrated, leading to heightened racial tensions. Watch this animation to find out about how migration helped led to increasing racial discrimination.

Press **start** to begin.

start



In what ways did people react to this violence?

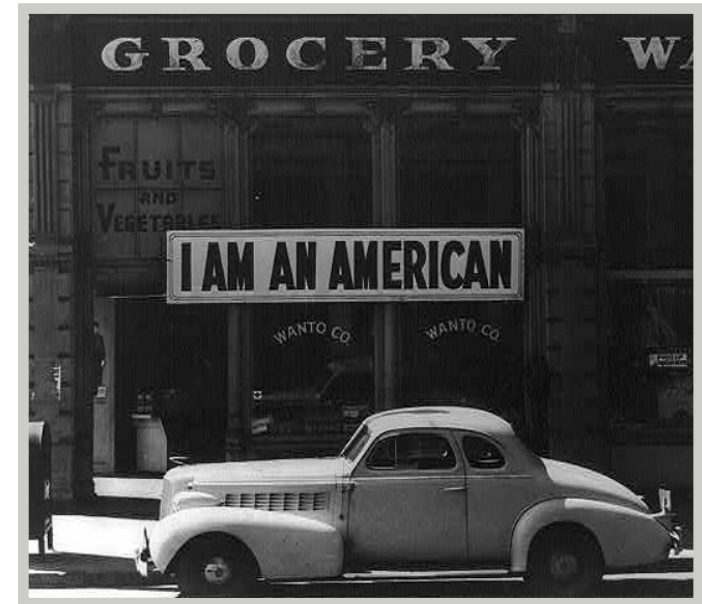


The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, sparked panic in U.S. society and fears that another attack was imminent.

There was a dramatic increase in anti-Japanese feeling, which led to discrimination against Japanese Americans.

On February 19, 1942, Roosevelt signed **Executive Order 9066**.

This required the forced removal of Japanese Americans from the West coast and their **internment** in relocation centers.



Why do you think this order was passed?



Press on the folder tabs to learn more about the Supreme Court decision in the case of ***Korematsu v. United States***.

Press **start** to begin.

start

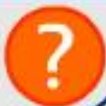




Both before and after the end of World War II, the U.S. federal government tried to ease mounting social tensions. Do you know how it attempted to achieve this? Press on the buttons to find out more about government policies.

Press **start** to learn more.

start



What other social polices did the government have?



The U.S. emerged from World War II and entered the 1950s as the dominant economic and military power in the world. It became a **superpower**.



The war had provided great economic and social opportunities to a wide range of different people. As a result, the U.S. entered the 1950s with a much larger and more complex economy and society. These factors led to a wide variety of new challenges.

What challenges do you think the government and the average American family faced?