

PEARL HARBOR

24 HOURS AFTER

EDUCATION GUIDE

PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITY

Before viewing this program, have students locate Pearl Harbor and Japan on a map so they understand the geographical context in which events in this documentary take place.



VOCABULARY

Before or after watching this program, students may want to define the terms below. Students can also keep a list of their own terms to define or any questions they may have as they are watching the program.

Egregious
Embargo
Galvanize
Hostilities
Infamy
Momentous
Profound
Succinct

INTRODUCTION

Although December 7 will forever be remembered as the day Pearl Harbor was attacked, little has been revealed about President Franklin D. Roosevelt's first responses to the news of Japan's attack on the United States on that fateful day in 1941. HISTORY® marks the 70th anniversary of that pivotal moment in world history with this two-hour special spotlighting secrets and little-known details about FDR's reactions in the earliest hours of the "date which will live in infamy." Drawing upon new information provided by the FDR Library, ***Pearl Harbor: 24 Hours After*** offers a rare glimpse at the man behind the presidency and how he confronted the enormous challenge of transitioning the United States from peacetime to war.

Leading historians, including Steve Gillon (author of the recently released book *Pearl Harbor: FDR Leads the Nation Into War*) provide insights into the costs and consequences of these events in which thousands of Americans lost their lives. This dramatic two-hour program also discusses the treatment of Japanese Americans in the wake of the attack. Students will learn about the context in which the U.S. entered World War II, and will be able to explore FDR's presidency and leadership during this tumultuous era in world history. This program also presents an opportunity to discuss ethics and political decision-making during wartime.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Pearl Harbor: 24 Hours After would be useful for History, Global Studies and Politics courses and for course units and lectures on World War II. It is appropriate for middle school and high school students.





DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How long did it take for President Roosevelt to learn the details about the Pearl Harbor attack? How does the speed of news reporting and information in 1941 compare with that of today?
2. Do you think December 7, 1941 was the most important day of Roosevelt's presidency, as one scholar suggests?
3. How many Americans died at Pearl Harbor? In addition to the lives lost, what other damage resulted from the Pearl Harbor attack?
4. Why do you think Roosevelt gave authorization to round up Japanese Americans suspected of being traitors and, later, ordered the construction of internment camps? What do you think about this decision?
5. Why do you think Roosevelt did not reveal all of the information he had about the damage at Pearl Harbor when he first met with leaders of Congress? Do you think this was the right decision?
6. Why do you think the U.S. cabinet members were so shocked when they learned about the extent of the damage at Pearl Harbor? Did they underestimate the Japanese?
7. How and when did the British declare war against Japan? Why did Roosevelt want to declare war against Japan first?
8. What was the response to Roosevelt's "Day of Infamy" speech?
9. What were some of the outcomes of the Pearl Harbor attack? What role do you think Roosevelt played in leading the nation during this era?



EXTENDED ACTIVITIES

- 1. Four Freedoms.** Almost a year before Pearl Harbor was attacked, President Roosevelt delivered his “Four Freedoms” speech outlining his views about the principles of American democracy that he felt should exist throughout the world. Ask students to locate this speech at www.ourdocuments.gov and create a presentation about the “Four Freedoms” and reflect on these ideals in the context of World War II. Students can discuss the ways they may have shaped Roosevelt’s decision to enter World War II.
- 2. Pearl Harbor in Perspective.** Working in small groups or individually, ask students to research the Pearl Harbor attack and create a one-page document with bullet points about the attack including key facts, casualties and outcomes.
- 3. “Day of Infamy.”** President Roosevelt delivered his “Day of Infamy” speech to Congress on December 8, 1941, the day after Pearl Harbor was attacked. Have students locate this speech online at www.ourdocuments.gov and read the speech aloud in small groups. Then, have students write a short response paper about Roosevelt’s speech. What was his main message? Students can also listen to the audio version of this speech online and compare and contrast the experience of reading the speech with listening to it.
- 4. Pearl Harbor Reflections.** As this documentary reveals, it took time for the news of the Pearl Harbor attack to circulate throughout the world. Within 24 hours, however, most Americans would have known the basic information about the attack, and that the U.S. stake in World War II had suddenly become elevated. Ask students to imagine they are thrust back in time to that date in 1941 and write a journal entry recording their reactions to the news of the Pearl Harbor attack.
- 5. Japanese Americans During World War II.** Immediately after the Pearl Harbor attack, President Roosevelt authorized the arrest of Japanese Americans suspected of being traitors, and later issued Executive Order 9066 resulting in their relocation to internment camps. Ask students to read the Executive Order and write a journal entry, op-ed piece or short paper from their own perspective responding to Roosevelt’s decision to intern Japanese Americans.



PRIMARY SOURCE

After the U.S. officially entered WWII in the wake of the Pearl Harbor attack, the nation mobilized to support the war effort. Below is an excerpt from a song written less than two weeks after the Pearl Harbor attack. Ask students to read the lyrics and discuss the questions below.

LET'S PUT THE AXE TO THE AXIS (EXCERPT)

Clear the decks for action
 The time for speech is past
 Let's do the job we have to do
 And get it over fast
 Let's Put The Axe To The Axis
 Let 'em know that their show is all through
 oh Let's Put The Axe To The Axis
 Lend a hand to the land we love true

(Performed by Abe Lyman, Recorded December 18, 1941;
Written by Corday, Mann, Weiss)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who or what is the "Axis" referenced in this song?
2. What role do you think patriotic songs such as this one played in the World War II effort?

WEBSITES

Background information about Pearl Harbor:

www.history.com/topics/pearl-harbor

Short video on the Pearl Harbor attack:

www.history.com/topics/pearl-harbor/videos#attack-pearl-harbor

70th Pearl Harbor Day Commemoration:

www.pearlharborevents.com

USS Arizona Memorial:

pacifichistoricparks.org/pearl-harbor-hawaii.php

BOOKS

- Clarke, Thurston. *Pearl Harbor Ghosts: The Legacy of December 7, 1941.* (Ballantine Books, 2001).
- Daniels, Roger. *Prisoners Without Trial: Japanese Americans in World War II.* (DeCapo Press, 2005).
- Gillon, Steven. *Pearl Harbor: FDR Leads the Nation into War.* (Basic Books, 2011).
- Wakatsuki Houston, Jeanne and James D. Houston. *Farewell to Manzanar.* (Houghton Mifflin Books for Children, 2002).