



Researcher's Notebook iPad App
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iPad app designed to emulate and model a researcher at work. Merges content and functionality to allow students and teachers to curate historic artifacts. Scaffolded questions and prompts allow students to do the work of historians. The app support literacy while fostering research skills. Moderated social networking fosters collaboration.

Homefront America in WW II is designed to improve content reading comprehension with an engaging array of source documents – including journals, maps, photos, posters, cartoons, historic data and artifacts. I developed it to serve as a model for blending essential questions, higher order thinking and visual interpretation. I intentionally refrained from explaining the documents, to afford students the chance to do the work of historians. A variety of thinking exercises are imbedded in the lesson to support reading comprehension. Graphic organizers support differentiated activities to assist the students in extracting meaning from the documents.

Hopefully this lesson serves as a model of how to infuse support for literacy into the more typical educational goal of content mastery. But more importantly, it is designed to demonstrate how student engagement can be "powered" by an essential question.

Instead of attempting to teach the American homefront experience during WWII via the memorization of historical facts (like "victory" gardens), this lesson approaches the same subject through a more timeless question "How did Americans change their lives to support the war effort?"

This essential question invites the students into the material as they draw from their life experience to construct a response. Guiding questions direct students to construct comparisons between the American experience in WWII and the Iraq / Afghanistan war. Moreover, since the events of September 11th, the very notion the "homefront" has been redefined by new perceptions of terrorism and homeland security.

For more ideas about teaching and technology visit <http://peterpappas.blogs.com>

HOW DID AMERICANS CHANGE THEIR LIVES TO SUPPORT THE WAR EFFORT?




History may overlook the effect of war on ordinary citizens. After analyzing these documents, you will be able to explain how ordinary Americans responded to the needs created by World War II.

While the United States struggled with the Great Depression of the 1930s, Germany, Italy, and Japan prepared for war. As the “clouds of war” formed in Europe and Asia, many Americans remembered the losses suffered in World War I and supported a strong isolationist foreign policy. In 1939, the U.S. still had a small and outdated army that used horses to pull its artillery. With the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939, America — while still not in the war — began to prepare for war and focus on the need to increase the production of arms and food to support the struggling democracies of Europe.

On 7 December 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The American isolationist debate was over. Within days, the United States was at war with Japan and its allies, Germany and Italy. A war of this size required an

enormous commitment of resources and labor. Victory was dependent on the contributions of Americans on two fronts: the battlefield and the home front. Between 1941 and 1945, millions of American men and women served in the armed forces in a global war. Here at home, millions more worked to produce the weapons, equipment, and supplies needed to fight the war. The federal and state governments were required to take a very active role in managing the lives of Americans to ensure that their efforts would support the war. The U.S. Census Bureau reported that during the war more than one-fifth of the U.S. population moved — 15.3 million — to find jobs and 16 million to serve in the armed forces. With millions of men overseas, America looked to its women to bring up our workforce strength.



Think Before You Start

- What resources are needed to wage a war?
- How could people on the home front help to supply these resources?
- What would you be willing to contribute to a war effort?
- How could the government convince the people to support a war?

Document 1

"We'll have lots to eat this winter, won't we Mother?"



**Grow your own
Can your own**

Notice how these people are supplying resources.

KIDS DO THEIR PART

Collecting Milkweed pods for lifejacket stuffing

Troop 106 of Irondequoit, NY did their part — making do on the home front in 1944.



Document 2



How did kids contribute to the war effort?
What role can kids play in a war today?



Milkweed

0856930102
0856930102

Document 3

"Our pride in our country, noted a home-front girl, "made us proud of ourselves." Boys and girls collected scrap materials for recycling, and they bought War Bonds and knitted afghans. George Curtis, born in 1935, remembered that even helping his parents perform household tasks made him feel he was making "a genuine contribution" and was "a part of the overall team." Whether helping with the dishes or the farm chores, George saw the war years "as a time for children such as me to feel of greater human worth or value; to be more respected by adults, because we had the opportunity to ... contribute."

— From William M. Tuttle Jr., *Daddy's Gone to War: The Second World War in the Lives of America's Children*.

The Researcher's Note Pad

As you analyze the documents, record your thinking on the note pad provided by your teacher. Your notes will help you to answer the question: How did Americans change their lives to support the war effort?

	Document 1	Document 2	Document 3	Document 4	Document 5	Document 6
How did kids contribute to the war effort?						

Document 4

During WWII Ray Hartman was a teenager living in Chicago.

"Everybody was campaigning to sell war bonds. We were using our allowances and paper drives and whatever way we could to get money to purchase the stamps. We'd go door-to-door and ask people to contribute dimes and quarters and fill up a book of stamps and buy the bonds.

The goal of the school was to raise \$80,000 to purchase a P-38 fighter plane. I was the student chairman of the drive, and after probably eight or nine months of work, we were successful, and there was a P-38 named after the school.

Alphonsus was the name of the school, but they named the plane "the Spirit of Saint Al's." We went to some Douglas Aircraft Company when they painted the name on the plane. I was thrilled, being the chairman of the student drive. I did the ribbon cutting or something like that. We received a letter of commendation from some general for the school. There were pictures taken with a couple of air force men who were pilots dressed in their uniforms, so it was a thrill."

— From Roy Hooper, *America Remembers the Home Front*



- What school campaigns were students involved in? How would you rate their success?
- What money-raising campaigns have been run at your school?

Document 5

A copy of a selection from the Point School Scrapbook.

Report of Miss Pitkin's Sixth Grade

I think the first thing our grade should report, is the perfectly splendid time we have had working together during this drive. We certainly have had a good time and we kept Shirley Fuller very busy recording our collections.

14 of us collected tin
8 brought 29 jigsaw puzzles
18 brought in keys and books
5 found 51 records
9 brought fat
16 collected rubber
7 brought coat hangers
3 brought games
22 brought stockings

We have made 38 Easter napkin holders for the trays of the veterans in the hospital at Sunmount.

Then on March 27, with the help of our mothers, we are the sponsors of a food sale of Un-Rationed foods to be held at the Fisher Store. In this way we shall be helping our government, our Junior Red Cross Victory Fund, and you. So come and see what good cooks our mothers are.

Shirley Fuller

Document 6



Pass the Ammunition!

The fats and greases you save in your kitchen are *ammunition* when they reach the fighting front. Salvage every speck and turn it in to your neighborhood collecting center. Every drop of fat and grease is an important contribution to the war effort.

The NARRAGANSETT ELECTRIC Company

SAVE ALL FATS and GREASES

DON'T BE WASTEFUL— CONSERVE

Document 7



**WAR SHIPMENTS
MEAN LESS
FUEL FOR ALL**

**Dress warmly indoors
AVOID COLDS**



What sacrifices were Americans asked to make for the war effort? What would they be asked to do today?

When you ride **ALONE** you ride with Hitler !



Document 8

"Focusing on the need to defeat the heinous Germans and Japanese, the radio shows exhorted children to collect scrap materials, buy War Bonds, and plant victory gardens. Listeners to Dick Tracy, for example, took the five-point pledge to combat waste, vowing "to save water, gas and electricity, to save fuel oil and coal, to save my clothes, to save Mom's furniture, to save my playthings."

Document 9

— From William M. Tuttle Jr., *Daddy's Gone to War: The Second World War in the Lives of America's Children*.