

World War II Experience Primary Source Research and Essay Assignment

Due: Monday, March 20th

The purpose of this assignment is to find and analyze primary source documents in order to learn about the American experience in World War II.

Assignment:

1. Find two primary source documents from two different sources which were written or spoken during the period December 7, 1941 and August 15, 1945. The different sources should also be from different theaters or regions. For example, do not find two diaries from soldiers who both fought in the European theater, or two speeches by Franklin Roosevelt, or two women who worked in factories. They must be from two different sources and areas of the war. The sources can be about life within the United States as well. **Note:** If you have family members or neighbors who were alive during World War II, you can interview them, or if you have any letters/diaries written by family members these would also work as primary source documents. **The sources should be written/spoken by Americans. Be sure to get my approval on the two documents that you choose.**

2. Write a 3- 4 page essay (typed and double spaced) that:
 - a. Has brief introduction of the two documents and the authors of the documents. The introduction should end with a thesis statement which states the basic idea that you learned about the American experience in World War II from the two documents. Thesis statement examples:
 - i. The American experience in World War II was dangerous for soldiers serving in the Pacific and exciting for women who worked in the factories.
 - ii. The American experience in World War II provided increased opportunities for African Americans but decreased the freedom for Japanese Americans.
 - b. Explains what the documents reveal about the World War II experience for Americans and compare the different experiences described in the documents.
 - c. In addition to the experiences shared in the documents, you must provide context for each author's experience in World War Two.
 - d. You must provide the point of view of each document, which means you must examine the background and location of the authors. **Point of View identifies an influence (ex: their background, gender, race, age, location, job) that may have shaped the author and explains how that particular influence specifically affected the content of the document.**

Helpful hints:

1. Find documents that are approximately 1 page in length. This will give you enough material to analyze but not be too long. If you find longer documents, you can choose to analyze a portion of the document. Spend time reading a variety of documents so that you will choose documents appropriate for this assignment and which will provide enough information to write about. Remember **I MUST approve the documents that you choose.**
2. Read carefully and make sure you are looking at actual primary sources. Some materials claim to be based on primary source accounts but they are secondary sources that simply use the primary sources for their information.
3. Remember to find documents from two different areas (example: a letter from a soldier serving on a Pacific island and a diary of a woman working in a factory, or a speech by an African American leader and a diary of a Japanese American in an internment camp)
4. You can use direct quotes of no longer than one sentence or simply paraphrase the ideas mentioned in the document. When you are referencing the documents in your essay, be sure to make it clear which document you are describing by citing them within your essay.
5. Your essay should also have a conclusion which summarizes the main points made in your essay and supports your thesis. No new ideas should be brought up in the conclusion.

Requirements:

Essay should be typed and double spaced using Times New Roman 12-point font.

Essay should be approximately 3-4 pages.

A Works Cited, with at least three sources (the primary source documents and sources for background/contextual information), should be included

Copies of the documents must be attached to your essay. These copies can be transcriptions of the documents or copies of the original document. If you use an interview with a friend or family member who lived in WWII provide a written transcript of the interview.